Vol. 18 No. 5
132
October 1998

Polyhedron® MAGAZINE

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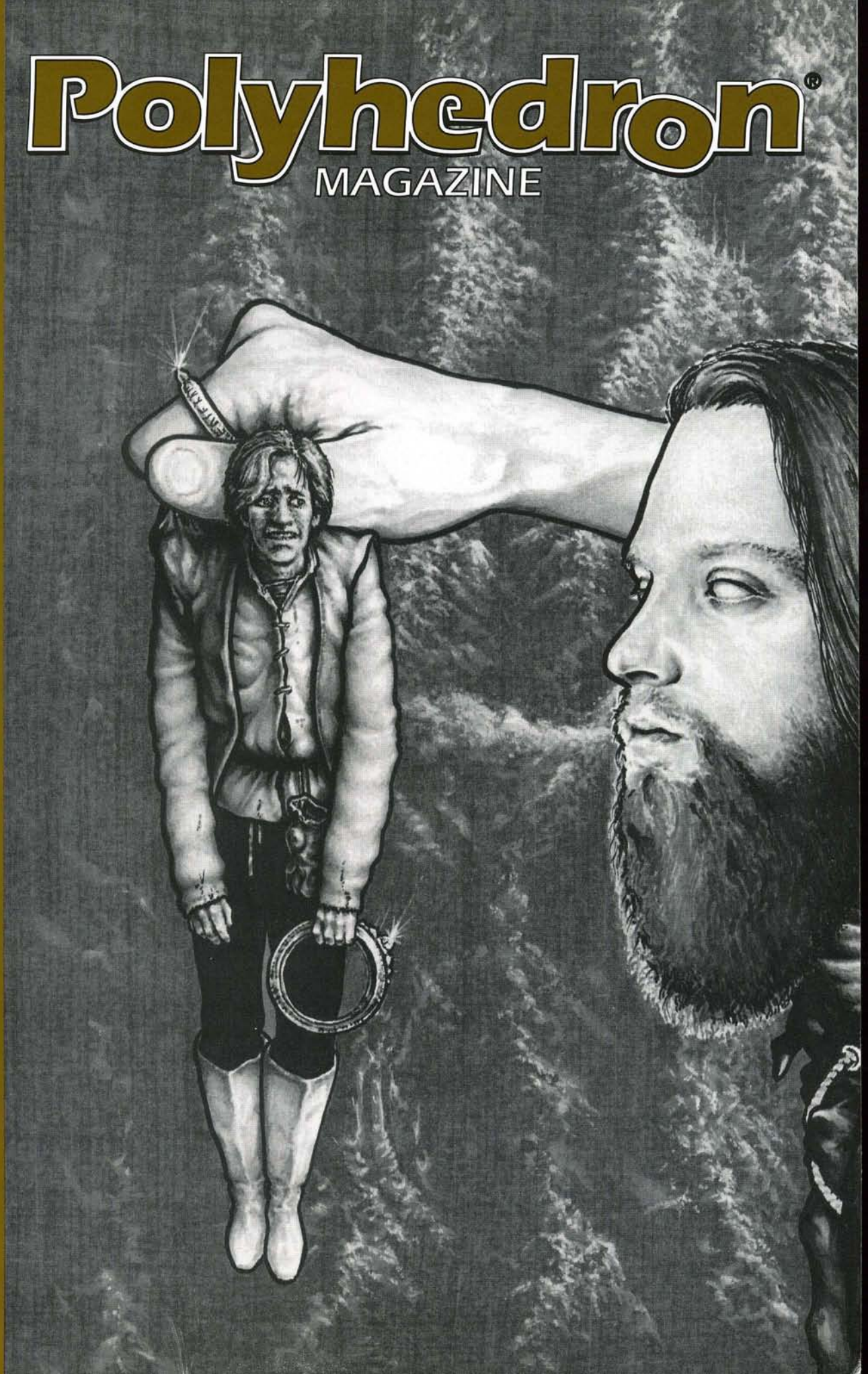


Spotlight on Robert Burns

Think it's hard to organize game days and conventions where you live? Meet Sergeant Robert Burns. As the RPGA Regional Director for the United States Military, he has the largest region on Earth.

by Stephen H. Jay

Q: How did you get started in the RPGA?

A: I met a gentleman named Nathan M. Carpenter at a convention in Oklahoma in 1991 and was quite impressed with his gaming ability and DMing style. Nathan was a member of the RPGA and later became the RPGA Regional Director for the state of Oklahoma. Nathan was also the President of Darkmoore (the largest gaming club in Oklahoma from 1991 to 1997) at the time. [Because of Nathan] I joined both Darkmoore and RPGA, and together we took the [two organizations] as far as we could. We were quite a team. Once in a Darkmoore Talisman column, Nathan was referred to as the soft-spoken diplomat and I was referred to as the "in-your-face man-of-action." That's about how it worked. Between the two of us it seemed like there was nothing we could not accomplish. I also served as Regional Director (RD) for Oklahoma during a period when there was no RD.

Q: Now you're the RD for a much larger area.

A: I am the RPGA US Military Regional Director. I serve all active duty US Service Members, their dependents, and their civilian counterparts wherever they happen to be from Bosnia-Herzegovina to submarine duty with the US Navy. While stationed at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma I also helped plan and run conventions, charity events, and game rooms at numerous conventions in Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

Q: What are some of the unique challenges in covering such a wide area?

A: (I once got) an e-mail from someone serving in the Atlantic Fleet that they were going to be putting ashore in Portugal in a few days and we're trying to find a gaming convention or just a game. It...really became a nightmare!

The toughest part is trying to stay in touch with our service members. Depending on what megalomaniac is rearing his ugly head each week, US Service members can and do end up almost anywhere on earth. Add to that trying to keep the lines of communication open (between members). An impossible task most of the time, but I try. When possible I try to get our members my contact data and help them with whatever they may need help with, from ordering modules, scoring rounds, planning events and helping direct them to the nearest gaming convention.

Q: So I guess that makes you a genuine "International Gamer."

A: I have been stationed at several Air Force Bases (AFB) around the world. Two of special note were the 1849 Electronic Installation Squadron at McClellan AFB in Sacramento, CA and the 3rd Combat Communications Group at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma City, OK. They had different missions, but they were similar in one way. To accomplish the mission you had to deploy (all over the world). So after ten years between these two units you can just imagine where I have been (the US, Great Britain, and the Orient). And if I was going there for any length of time you can bet I was taking my gaming materials with me!

Q: Is gaming different with your military friends?

A: OH YES! I prefer to game with service members, or people with previous military experience. I find that they already understand the team concept. They work together quickly and efficiently. Our success rates and team scores are always very high. Bickering amongst players is almost non-existent. Now bickering with the Judge, well, that's another matter altogether! We all stick together. You can always count on the man next to you. I like that, knowing that I can really trust the members of my team.

ed. note: unfortunately, we could not get a picture of Robert before press time. Suffice it to say that he is a blazingly handsome man.

Robert Burns is currently stationed in England and anxiously awaiting Euro GenCon. All his friends, old and new, are invited to contact him at the following addresses.

US Military Member Contact Data:
Robert E. Burns, PSC 50 Box 651, APO, AE 09494. DSN: 236-8253.
British Member Contact Data:
Robert E. Burns, 75 Wodham Drive, Brackley, Northhamptonshire, NN13 6 NB.
Email: <mytore@gamergod.force9.co.uk>
Website: <http://members.tripod.com/~face_eater/>

Do you know someone who does volunteer work for the RPGA, but doesn't get much credit? Contact Stephen Jay with your Member Spotlight suggestions at <SJAYKahn@aol.com>. ❑

Notes From

Winner Certificates

The new RPGA prize certificates have been received with mixed reactions. Questions were raised on the RPGA-Talk email list about their use, and I posted a response to RPGANews and RPGA-Talk. That response is repeated below, making it official. In addition, we present our first special offer!

Die Roll Modifiers

New prize certificates have two uses: as a die roll modifier, or "die bump," and for special offers. The die bump can be used on any roll in any RPGA tournament to affect only your character, and only rolls made for your character. The modifier applies to the **whole** roll, so a 4d6 roll becomes 4d6+1. That's all. They can be used after the dice are rolled, and indeed that's what we expect. They cannot be used to affect rolls of other characters, and they cannot be used as die bumps by anyone other than the player named on them (so they cannot be traded or given away). Judges cannot use them to affect rolls while judging.

The Exception

The one exception to die bumps comes in the area of automatic failures. *These certificates cannot be used to bump a roll out of the automatic failure range of any given die roll.* Many game systems have a number or range of numbers where a natural roll is a failure no matter how much you modify it. Examples in the AD&D® game include rolling a one on a saving throw, or a natural 20 on proficiency checks. Automatic failures will remain so, regardless of how many certificates you hold.

You can check for potential failure ranges by seeing if it is possible within the rules to reach the whole die range without magic or proficiency bonuses. For example, system shock rolls stop at 99%, not 100%. The failure range is exactly "100." Resurrection survival stops at 100%, so there is no failure range there. Thief skills top out at 95%; a natural roll of 96-100 is a failure. Regardless of additions, a natural roll of 96-100 fails.

The process of determining what constitutes an automatic failure and applying that fairly requires judgment, but that is why we have judges. They must exercise this decision-making power to make the game fun within the rules, without twisting the game against players.

Prize certificates will be specifically disallowed for some special events. A notice to that effect will accompany the game, so you know in advance. Assume they're useable unless we say otherwise.

Special Offers

Don't forget that you can save these certificates for special offers. We are not the only ones who can think up special offers. If you think of something cool to redeem them for, let us know. If the idea is feasible, we'll look into making it work. For instance, admission to GEN CON® Game Fair won't work, but a free RPGA game at GEN CON will. We've already thought of using them towards membership too, so don't give us that one, please.

The First Special Offer

The first special offer we'd like to announce is specifically for LIVING CITY™ campaign players. Prize certificates are redeemable for 500 xp per character level (so an 8th level character gets 4,000 xp). This must be done at the convention where you won the prize. The convention coordinator, Regional Director, or LIVING CITY campaign staff can authorize this use. The amount of xp and the date should be written on the back, along with the character's name, and the authorizing person should sign and print their name under the information. The prize certificate is then voided and becomes the certificate for the extra xp. You may only do this for the character you were playing when you won. This offer may be spread to other LIVING™ campaigns.

In Closing

I hope this helps you understand the uses of the prize certificates. Keep in mind that even if you win one and hate the die bump idea, you don't have to use it. Also, consider that the players who win them will usually be the better roleplayers, and the better players probably won't abuse them (otherwise they wouldn't be the better roleplayers).

The die bump is a tool, like a screwdriver. Screwdrivers can be used to poke an eye out, but that is not their purpose. People don't stop making screwdrivers because they could be weapons, they just trust that most people won't abuse them. The same logic applies here.

Lastly, the certificates can only be used once, so a judge who accepts one to modify a die roll should void the certificate (don't tear them up without asking the player).

Next issue: the convention support information I promised this issue.
Until next time, go carefully but boldly.

The Thieves' Guild
TSR, Inc.

Master Thief
Lisa Stevens

Sharper
Robert Wiese

Filchers
Tech Support: 800/324-6496

Cutpurses
Donna Woodcock
Paul Alan Timm

Rogue (Apprentice)
Jeff Quick

COVER STORY: Dennis Detwiler shows us the danger of stealing rings from giants. Especially eerie, pupilless giants.

Hi Jeff,

First, I'd like to say I really enjoy the POLYHEDRON® magazine and glad it's back. As for the purpose of this letter, I am just wondering a few things. What is the story (past, present, and future) behind the LIVING CITY™ campaign and Ravens Bluff? I really like playing LC but I'm always confused with new things I find out about it when I go to conventions. For example, when did Procampur come into existence? And what's the history behind all the wars? Could you perhaps put out an issue (or more) about Ravens Bluff? I want to write campaigns and this information would help.

Also, I was wondering about rumors I heard that Ravens Bluff is going to have a visit from the Blood Wars? And has anyone considered writing novels about Ravens Bluff? Those would be great for understanding the city more.

Thanks,

Shawn Morley
Ont., Canada

Quick & dirty: LIVING CITY is a tournament campaign game. You make a character at a convention or game day, and play that character in any LIVING CITY game anywhere else they're played! Cool, eh?

Want to know more? Available NOW in gaming stores is *The City of Ravens Bluff*, a 160-page book detailing the Network's very own tournament campaign game. Written by The Man, Ed Greenwood, it's more detail than any novel could give you.

As for the Blood Wars, you may have heard about our *High Level Campaign*. If your LC character is high level and looking for more challenge, this is the next step. Just be careful, berk. It gets a little rough on the outer planes.

Greetings Jeff, Robert, and the rest of the RPGA crew,
My name is Sumit Sarkar. I'm 25, and finishing up my Masters in Criminal Justice at the Universty of Colorado. I was fortunate ten years ago to move to Denver, where there is a very active RPGA community led by Ken Ritchart, Donald Bingle, Jeff White, Saul Resnikoff (he just won a Grand Master tourney at GEN CON® Game Fair), and a host of others I'm sure you'd know. We have 3 conventions per year, and I've been lucky enough to participate in all of them since moving here.

I joined the Network to add continuity to my LIVING CITY character and join friends in playing. During my membership, I have exclusively concentrated on playing LC at conventions (I don't have much time for gaming). During this time, the prevailing question on my mind (as well as other members, I'm sure) has been:
WHAT CAN THE RPGA DO FOR ME?

I thoroughly enjoy each issue of POLYHEDRON magazine and read it from cover to cover. I think you've all done a wonderful job. I enjoy articles pertaining to "improving one's roleplaying and game table manners" the most, and (dare I say it) Ed Greenwood's *Border Kingdoms* articles least.

I don't play in FORGOTTEN REALMS®, GREYHAWK®, RAVENLOFT® or any other common campaign settings. However...I LOVE the DARK SUN® setting—I own every product and recently began a weekly regular campaign. It's completely unique and fascinating!

In POLYHEDRON #131 you mentioned another LIVING™ campaign in the works. PLEASE create a LIVING DARK SUN campaign. There are a very talented group of local writers that I may be able to convince into writing tourney modules and a much larger internet community would LOVE to see it as well (i.e. the DS mailing list). I'm sure there are other people. Anyway, I hope to hear from you soon on the feasibility and so forth.

Sincerely,

Sumit Sarkar
Denver, CO

Glad you like the mag. If you want a LIVING DARK SUN campaign, I'd suggest you rally your writers, and pitch it to us. If you will work on maintaining it, we will consider sanctioning it.

How's that for what RPGA can do for you? The rule of thumb is: you get out of it as much or more than what you put into it. If you want to see things happen, come talk to us.

Dear Mr. Editor,
I can't tell you how much I love the POLYHEDRON. I sleep on a copy every night, reading my recent back issues daily, and they have changed my life! The annoying back aches I used to have? Gone. Stutter? Gone. Boring friends? Gone. Poor personal hygiene? Well, still there, but fading. Plus, I no longer trip on my shoe laces since I read the knot-tying article, and I have dedicated my life to studying icelandic culture since reading the recent BIRTHRIGHT® campaign insert!

In appreciation, I have started a petition to have your esteemed visage placed on a MAGIC® card. I hope it succeeds! Please forward me your personal information so I can arrange a marriage with my sister and include you in my will.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kulp
An adoring fan

No, Kevin, I'm not running your rejected proposal for MONSTROUS ARCANA®: Flumph-apalooza.

Table Talk presents:

Summer Convention Love!

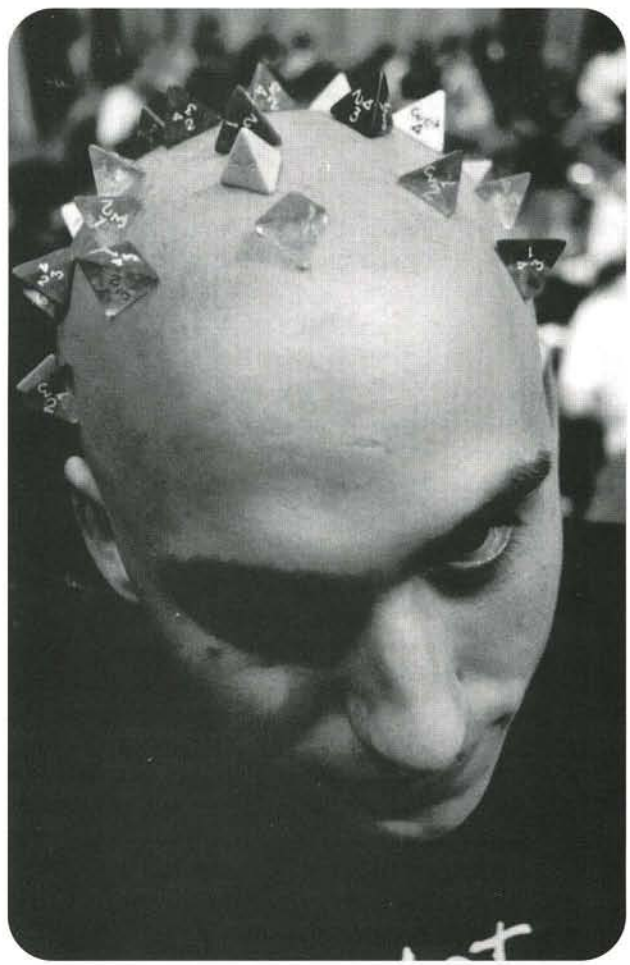
by Robert Wiese

This year's GEN CON® Game Fair was the best ever. We achieved record successes in all measurable areas, as shown by the statistics below (yes, even cons can have stat blocks). I was especially pleased with the ease we experienced throughout the weekend. The arena worked well for us again, with the exception of the night that *They Might Be Giants* were playing right outside the gaming area. The new showcase gaming area was a mixed success. I watched more than 70 people in LIVING DEATH™ character costumes interacting in that area during slot 8 and was very pleased. It worked less well for tabletop games, but we were experimenting; things don't always work perfectly.

The LIVING CITY™ interactive was a big success, from the two hours in the city through the drinking contest on the ship right to the two hours on the Pirate Isles. The singing pirates were my favorite; they were mostly in tune and added that little extra to the whole atmosphere. Katy McClurkin dressed as the sea hag was well worth seeing. I did not recognize her!

The interactive raised over $3,000 for Make-A-Wish Foundation. New city officials were selected, and all the in-game news can be found in the Trumpeters online at the website. If you are not connected to the internet, go to your local library and borrow their terminals to check it out.

The new site worked very well, despite getting soaked walking from the dealer hall to the Arena on Wednesday and Thursday (until I learned the mostly dry way). New banners helped everyone find what they were looking for, and the Andon registration area kept the lines down very well. We had an event ticket booth in the Arena next to HQ, which was very convenient. Kudos to the Andon staff for handling everything onsite and solving problems quickly; we could not have done it without them.



We don't know who this guy is, but he looks so very cool.

Some statistics for you:

- Over 20,000 individuals attended the convention, up more than 800 from past years.
- We ran 928 total tables of RPGA events, up more than 75 from our best year ever.
- The average judge score was 156, up from 150 last year and 145 or lower in prior years.
- We took in 359 new and renewing GUILD-LEVEL™ memberships, and 711 FELLOWSHIP-LEVEL™ memberships.
- We raised $13,800 for charity, our best ever.
- A survey taken in slot 10 resulted in a an overall satisfaction with the RPGA program of 78% (This means 78% of the respondents selected a "4 "or 5" out of 5 on overall satisfaction). You like us!

Thanks

We could not have run such a successful show without the help of many people. Heartfelt thanks go to all of the following (in no particular order), and to anyone not on this list who helped out: **Billie Glimpse, Carol Clarkson, Chris Warnica, Darryl Baker, Therese Baker, David Kingsley, David Samuels, David Santana, David Vaught, Debbie Vaught, Dennis Jones, Derek Rolvs-**

By every measure, this was the best Game Fair the Network has ever had.

photos by **Brandon Amancio**

more... Summer Convention Love!

bakken, Heather Johnson, Jason Wu, Jay Fisher, Jon Naughton, Josh Gollnick, Linda Baldwin, Liz Black, Misty Gates, Norm Ritchie, Peitor Murison, Ratty, Rob Shoemaker, Robin Vitti, Shae Wesson, Steve Gabriel, Sue Farnsworth, Susan Braidman, Susan Lee, Tammy Sampson, Tom Nolan, Will Sampson, Jae Walker, Jason Nichols, Christy Nichols, Cindy Mulken, Danielle Ostach, Pat Connolly, Michael Durant, Tamara Whitehouse, Jennie Wright, Brandon Amancio, David Baker, Austin Chick, Scott Dulac, John "Zip" Elmstead, Glen Goodwin, John Hinkle, David Kelly, Dan LaFleur, Art Lobdell, Alex Lombardi, James Maloney, Diane Mosher, Gail Reese, Greg Sherwood, Sandy Spitz, Wayne Straiton, Dara Tressler, Jeff Tressler, Mike Watts, Carl Buehler, Jamie Chambers, John Curtis, Dan Donnelly, Dave Decker, Leonard Dessert, Bob Farnsworth, Rosanne Fisher, George Fulda, Ed Gibson, Thomas Hammerschmidt, Claire Hoffman, Larry Hull, Dan Hurda, Dave Kelman, Al Lavigne, Randall Lemon, Mark Liberman, Lee McClurkin, Wes Nicholson, Ed Peterson, Vic Polites, Tom Prusa, Curtis Rauschenburger, Joyce Rauschenburger, and **Ed Rose.**

Special thanks go to the key people who made it happen: **Cheryl Frech, John A.T. Vaccaro, Willie Burger, Don Weatherbee, Tom Fortunato, Shaun Horner,** and **Jeff Quick.**

Service Awards

At the member breakfast, the RPGA presented Service Awards to those who have caught our attention with their dedication and hard work for the Network. This year's recipients were:

Nicky Rea—for tournament writing: 10 tournament rounds
Robert Wiese—for tournament writing: 30 tournament rounds
Dan Donnelly—for tournament writing: 40 tournament rounds
Jason Nichols, Jae Walker, and **Troy Daniels**—for establishment and running of the RPGA Judge Certification Program
Ron and **Margaret Heintz**—for creation and running of Virtual Seattle LIVING™ campaign
David Samuels, Ruth Pinsky, and **Linda Baldwin**—for support of Network events at major conventions in New Jersey/New York area
Cheryl Frech—for continued commitment to the GEN CON RPGA program and doing all the necessary tasks to make it happen
Tim Breen—for providing the RPGA talk list, unofficial RPGA website, and creation of a soon-to-be-released simple scoring data entry program
Gene Luster—for building up Network presence and activity in Southern California and Nevada
Mark Middleton—for coordinating volunteers
Cisco Lopez-Fresquet—for answering all those LIVING CITY rules clarification questions
Steve Jay IV—for helping Tom Prusa with the LIVING JUNGLE™ campaign, and for continued contributions to POLYHEDRON magazine
Frank Timar—for acting as New Jersey Regional Director even though he was not holding the position

Next Year

We are already working on plans for next year. Look for some LARPs, a national roleplaying championship (details next issue), better events, plus all of the great things that you come to expect from the RPGA at GEN CON (and amazing things if your expectations are low). Judge and volunteer recruiting is already under way, so contact HQ if you want to be involved. The theme for next year is "The Inferno," so expect a hellacious good time.

Leonard Dessert (L) and Brian Lademann (R) mug it up at the interactive.

Jeff's Quickie Review

It's no secret that I love conventions. I love getting to skip out on "real" work for a few days and go goof off with members and buy them dinners.

Origins

I talked with a whole lot of people about what they want to see in the Network at Origins. I had great mealtime conversations with **Jason Nichols, Mark Jindra,** and **George Aber**. In addition, we had a great seminar with AD&D designer, Monte Cook, and Wizards CEO, Peter Adkison, on the topic, "If we did a third edition, what would you like to see?" **Jae Walker, Keith Hoffman, Ed Gibson, Kenn Boyl, Steve Jay,** and several others met for a while and talked about AD&D gripes and likes. It was educational and entertaining.

On Sunday I had a long, fascinating conversation with a mob of people including Jae Walker, **Chris Ruester**... oh, it was Sunday... I can't even remember everyone. I took notes though, and posted them on our internal email. Good stuff.

I also had goodies to give away, as promised a couple of issues ago. Right before I left for Origins, we discovered a forgotten cache of LC4s in our storage room, as well as some RAVENLOFT® setting *Bleak House* boxed sets. People who were near me arbitrarily received freebies throughout the con just for talking to me. **Let this be a lesson!** Talking to Jeff at conventions is good, and can result in random free stuff. Got it? Good.

GEN CON

If you weren't inside being disturbed by

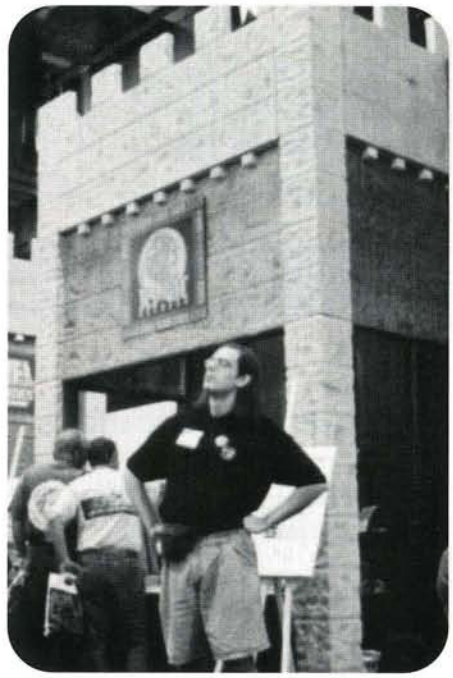
They Might Be Giants on Thursday night, I sure hope you were outside conga-ing with me to their dandy tunes. On a selfish note, if anyone found a gray TMBG t-shirt with ants chewing up a phone during HQ teardown, that would be mine. I'd sure be grateful if someone who found it returned it to me.

Now, on to Network business! We got a huge boost in visibility this year with our own tower in the TSR Castle! Whenever the dealer room was open, you could talk or play a first-timers' LIVING CITY game with our very cool DMs, **Brain Lademann** and **Austin Chick**! If you weren't careful, the silver tongue of **Liz Black** could talk you into buying some of our ultra-spiff merchandise (which we still offer on the mailer! Look!).

In addition to Liz's tireless crusade, I was ably assisted by punster extraordinaire **Sterling Hershey, Ben Harris, Martin Hanley, Athena Petticord,** the lovely and talented **Alicia Maddex**, George Aber, **Chris Warnica, Mike** "You're Formed" **Howard, Brian Haag**, and **Ron Bedison**, the last honest man alive (unless he lied to me).

I also had a great late night talk at HQ with **Willie Burger** and an entertainingly outspoken young woman who wouldn't tell me her name. Thanks y'all.

In fact, thanks to everybody who helped out! Our first year in the dealer's room was a hit because of you, and we'll be back next year with more surprises everywhere. Get involved NOW!



I pose regally outside the RPGA domain at the castle. ▶

Winners!

We had too many GEN CON winners to list them all, so here's the tops:

AD&D Open:

1st place—David Kowalski, Alan Black, Victor St. James, Collin Davenport, Robert A. Beasley, Mark S. Hermanns, Karen M. Mills, Michael Seagrave
2nd place—Nathan Sterrett, William Obringer, Adam Smith, Keith Hawley, Brent Welsh, Seth Simmons, John Albert, Eric Tam
3rd place—David Replogle, Gordon Replogle, Travis Johnson, Michael Warner, (James) Michael Hulsey, Charles W. Cantrell, Jay Kissell, Neil Blackwell

Alternity Open:

1st place—Michael Brock, Sholom West
2nd place—Karl Beutel, Robert Mason

AD&D Feature:

1st place—Mollie Brewsaugh, Laura Croston, Jason Dandy, George Fulda, Andy Hopp, James Kelly, Fred Lepley, Michael McDougall, Ken Ritchart, Craig Walker
2nd place—Klim Altman, Aerine Caerwyn, Rachelle Goldman, Matt Lovell, Glenn McCann, Ed Peterson, Rebecca Slitt, Anise Strong, John Wyatt, Glen Yarbrough
3rd place—Carol Bailey, Lee Blankenship, Paul Bushland, Talmon Feverstein, Alexzandra Griffin, Steven Helt, Bill Legate, Adam Morse, John Reynolds, Jayson Rock

AD&D Masters:

1st place—Linda Bingle, Greg Dreher, Andy Green, Karen Gunderson, Clark Kruta, Karen Mills, Dan Rodriguez, Timothy Thomas, Tammy Tobin-Janzen, Josh Wendt
2nd place—Tina Manderscheid, Mike Collins, Laurie Fox, David Kowalski, Bill Legate, David Nyman, Ed Peterson, Ken Ritchart, Andrew VanHooreweghe, Michael Watts

AD&D Grand Masters:

1st place—Bob Arco, David Baker, Donald Bingle, Richard Bingle, Scott Dulac, Mary Konczyk, Ivan Mulkeen, Ken Ritchart, Bill Sheffield, George Vellella.

AD&D Paragon:

1st place—Mary Konczyk, Kevin Kulp, Randall Lemon, David Medina

AD&D Team Challenge:

1st place—Company of the Framed Adventurers (3-time champion)
2nd place—Oh We Sank Your Battleship
3rd place—Eric Tam and Company

Pinnacle Events:

Best Heroic Fantasy Player—David W. Baker
Best Heroic Fantasy Judge—Vic Polites
Best Horror Player—Jeff Kennedy
Best Horror Judge—Robert Hobart
Best Living Campaign Player—Jason Bulmahn
Best Living Campaign Judge—Leonard Dessert
Best Heroic Sci-Fi Player—Michael Brock
Best Heroic Sci-Fi Judge—Timothy Wetzel
Best Overall RPGA Player—David W. Baker
Best Overall RPGA Judge—Leonard Dessert

Best of the Best Champion:

Saul Resnikoff

If you won a RPGA event at the Game Fair and did not pick up your prize, then your membership was credited for the amount of your prize. Trophy or product winners have received their prizes by now.

Table Talk

News for the Masses

by Robert J. Kinney of the Make-A-Wish Foundation

On behalf of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central Florida, thank you for your generous donation of $415.00 raised through your charity event [at MegaCon]. We believe that helping to fulfill the wish of a seriously ill child is a loving and meaningful gesture. Your support of our organization is greatly appreciated.

Your gift will help fund the wish of Aaron, an 8-year-old from Winter Springs who suffers from leukemia. Aaron has three siblings, but he spends most of his time at home while they are in school, or involved with outside activities. His wish is for a computer; this computer will provide Aaron with hours of entertainment through games and learning activities. This beautiful young child deserves to experience some of the joys that a child his age enjoys. This computer will provide the excitement, and relieve some of the loneliness that Aaron experiences. Although we can't cure an ill child, we can provide hope and a happy diversion from a routine of treatments, doctors, and hospital visits.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central Florida is a not-for-profit organization whose sole purpose is to fulfill the favorite wish of any child between the ages of 2 1/2 and 18 who has a diagnosed life-threatening illness. On behalf of Aaron and all the children we serve, we thank you for your generosity and compassion.

by Glen Goodwin of DWO

Death Warmed Over is sponsoring the RPGA® Network Club Webring. If your club has a website, join our Webring so that others can find your club easily on the Internet.

Joining is fairly painless and help is available for the HTML-limited. For more information, see us at <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/dwo/clubring/> or send email to <arei@nunet.neu.edu>.

We'd like to get as many RGPA Network Clubs as possible on the ring for continuity, so drop us a line. And if you don't have a website, get one!

Rathskeller News by Theodore Stadtlander, Editor

At the GEN CON® Game Fair '98 RPGA Awards Ceremony, David Baker was named the Best Overall RPGA player. This ocurred on Sunday, August 9, 1998. He received an average 25.2 point score over ten slots of gaming. His prize was a big trophy cup and some product.

David also won the Best Fantasy RPGA Player award. The prize was another big trophy and product. He won several separate events including: two DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE® events, two LIVING DEATH™ events, the Feature, the Grandmasters event, and the Replay event.

As editor and member of the club, I think I am speaking for all the members, that we all congratulate David on his accomplishments.

GOT NEWS?

Send charity events, convention successes, dire warnings, big announcements, angry proclamations, or anything else people need to hear, to Table Talk! You'll be glad.

What's All This Then? ➤

Last issue's list of names and rankings went over very well, so we're planning on running the list regularly. At right are our Top 50 rankings for Campaign Players, Classic Players, and Judges between June 1, 1998 and September 30, 1998.

So why are we ranking people? We want to let everyone know who's eligible to attend and be a part of National Tournament Play at GEN CON® Game Fair '99. The first annual **Best of the Best Tournament** was a great success this past year, and it'll be even better next year. The rankings will track players and judges throughout the year until next Game Fair.

We rank players and judges who have played or judged in seven or more games. Maintaining a score over a range of more games earns a higher rank than someone with the same score, but who has participated in fewer games (It's harder to keep a high score the more you play or judge).

For this period, two Classic Players tied for 50th, so we included both. For Judge ranking, 50 judges have not yet judged seven games, so **there's still room for YOU** on the list! If you've judged a few already, get back in there, slugger! Keep it up!

In future issues, we'll also print names of members who have made Master, Grandmaster, and Paragon levels since the last listing. Get out there and game!

NEXT ISSUE BOX

C is for cookie. That's good enough for me. Jeff is in a fine kettle of fish as he cooks up an issue themed around food. Feast your eyes next issue on Food, glorious food.

Campaign Players

Rank	Name	Avg Points/Games
1	Tom Jorgensen	25/9
2	Phil Tobin	21/9
3	Victor Bushfield	20/10
3	Daniel A Brackmann	20/10
5	Brenda F Rudge	20/7
6	Faeghan B White Wolf	19/10
7	Alicia Maddex	19/8
8	Scott Crater	18/13
9	Gregory J Lloyd	18/12
10	Steve Null	18/11
11	Michael Cooper	18/9
12	Thomas Nolan	18/8
13	Patrick J Anderson	17/15
14	Susan Ballinger	17/11
14	Jerry Estal	17/11
16	Melanie Heydorn	17/10
17	David M Hirst	17/9
17	Brad Pietrzak	17/9
17	Cisco Lopez-Fresquet	17/9
20	Paul A Zellem	17/8
20	Sandy Spitz	17/8
22	John Whitworth	17/7
22	Nicholas Perch	17/7
22	Robin Kleihege	17/7
25	Malcolm C Wood	16/15
26	Mac Chambers	16/10
27	Steve Pearce	16/9
28	Terry L Hawkins	16/8
28	Matt Langford	16/8
28	Kimberly A Wetzel	16/8
28	Benjaman Zoss	16/8
32	Richard Gurdak	15/9
32	Angelos Kaldis	15/9
34	Brian Dunseith	15/8
35	Thomas E Terrill	15/7
35	Tony Fulford	15/7
35	James C Beeler	15/7
38	James Frederick Todd	14/13
39	David H Mynu	14/10
40	Andrew Rothstein	14/9
40	Daniel Measel	14/9
42	James Traino	14/8
43	Chris Wilcox	14/7
43	Robert Ehmann	14/7
33	Sean Kyle	14/7
33	William H Bible	14/7
47	Chris McGuigan	13/11
47	Larry Heydorn	13/11
49	John R Moore	13/10
49	Connie R Bechtel	13/10

Classic Players

Rank	Name	Avg Points/Games
1	Eric Tam	24/7
2	Paul Bushland	23/10
3	Kevin W Kulp	23/7
4	Craig Walker	22/11
5	Ken Ritchart	22/7
6	Scott Dulac	21/9
7	Donald J Bingle	20/12
8	Randall W Lemon	20/9
9	David Baker	20/8
10	Jonathan Naughton	19/13
11	Klim Altman	19/11
12	Michael Sanchez	19/7
12	Thomas Tabor	19/7
14	Mollie J Brewsaugh	18/10
15	Michael McDougall	18/8
16	Steven T Helt	18/7
17	Robert Mason	17/10
18	Linda Bingle	17/9
19	Brett Bakke	17/7
20	Samuel E Sherry	16/11
21	Bill Sheffield	16/7
21	Aerine R Caerwyn	16/7
23	Richard Bingle	15/12
24	Bill Legate	15/11
24	Edward A Peterson	15/11
26	William McCaig	15/9
26	Chad Patterson	15/9
28	Kenneth R Hoffman, Jr.	15/8
29	David Nyman	15/7
29	Unknown Member	15/7
29	Andrew Vanhooreweghe	15/7
29	Jack M Miller	15/7
29	Anise K Strong	15/7
34	Adam H Morse	14/10
34	John Reynolds	14/10
36	Glen R Goodwin	14/7
36	Douglas M Warren	14/7
38	Adam Smith	13/8
39	Eric Friedlander	12/11
40	Jesse Bvenlky	12/8
41	John Pollock	12/7
41	David Chavira	12/7
43	Barry Goldstein	11/8
44	Riyad Shamma	11/7
45	Daniel B Wilson	10/7
45	Jerry J Chubb	10/7
45	Keith Hawky	10/7
48	Rebecca Slitt	9/7
48	Scott Puelo	9/7
50	Stephen Donawick	5/7
50	Neal Meyers	5/7

Judges

Rank	Name	Avg Points/Games
1	Brandon Kavanagh	178/8
2	Steve Hess	177/8
3	Joel E Youngs	173/7
4	Thomas Prusa	171/11
5	James R Wynen	171/7
6	Vic Polites	170/8
7	Chris Miller	170/7
8	Mark Somers	168/8
9	Pat Connolly	168/7
10	Gregory Dreher	167/8
11	David Bujard	166/7
11	Gregg Peevers	166/7
13	Stephen Wales	165/11
14	Sholom J West	165/7
15	John A Tomkins	164/9
16	Gabriel McCall	163/8
17	Mark Middleton	163/7
17	John Vilandre	163/7
19	Richard Dennis	161/11
20	Tony Calder	161/7
21	David Kelman	160/12
22	Todd M McGovern	160/9
23	Andrew Bean	160/7
24	Geoffrey Christy	158/8
25	J M West	157/10
26	Terry Steyaert	157/8
27	Jean Gray	157/7
28	Wes Nicholson	156/24
29	Leonard S Dessert	156/7
30	Robert J Defendi	155/7
31	Carl Symondson	154/13
32	Robert Hitz	154/8
33	Steven C Sampson	154/7
34	Claire M Hoffman	151/7
35	Robert Ehmann	150/9
36	James Alonso	146/11
37	Dwight Davis	144/7
38	Glenn E Smith II	143/7
39	John D Elmstedt	141/8
40	Agnes Thompson	136/8
41	Bryan Conry	128/7
41	Douglas Ironside	128/7
43	Roger N Bert II	126/9
44	Gregory J Lloyd	117/26
45	---	
46	---	
47	---	
48	---	
49	---	
50	---	

Virtual Seattle Screamsheet

When Ron and Mj conceived Virtual Seattle (VS), they saw it as a way for Shadowrun players to enjoy the benefits of LIVING CITY™ style games, with the ability to close some of the loopholes found in the LIVING CITY campaign.

by Wes Nicholson

Overall, they did an excellent job, one which I try to maintain. But, neither the Heintzes nor myself are perfect, and we (like other LIVING Campaign directors) must constantly respond to attempts by a few individuals to rape the game rules for the benefit of their character. This is contrary to the spirit of Living campaigns, and in some cases contrary to the rules.

Let me assure you that I have no problem introducing retroactive rules to fix a problem. A few players trying to beat the system will not ruin VS for the majority.

Here's a summary of things that have come up recently regarding the VS campaign just so everyone is aware.

Shadowrun 3rd edition (SR3)

The core rules for VS will be changed to SR3 effective January 1, 1999. All existing characters should be converted to SR3 (pages 323 - 324) by that date, with the following restrictions:

- No optional rules will be included.
- Metahuman allergies from old characters remain. They become flaws, and the benefits taken at character creation are the corresponding edge. This counts towards the 10 points each of edges and flaws.
- Magical adepts who can astrally project may still do so, but must take a special edge in Astral Projection, costing 4 points. This is ONLY available to existing characters who can project under SR2 rules. This counts towards the 10 point limit on edges.

Edges and Flaws

As of January 1, 1999 edges and flaws will be available (including to existing characters) with the following restrictions:

- No more than 10 points each of edges and flaws per character.
- Flaws cannot be for technical skills (eg B/R skills), nor for knowledge skills. They may be social only if it can affect the game at the table.
- The following edges/flaws are not permitted in VS: Exceptional Attribute, Incompetence (skills), Borrowed Time, Paraplegic, Quadriplegic, Amnesia, Compulsive, Flashbacks, Total Pacifist, Bad Reputation, Day Job, Dark Secret, Extra Contact, Friends in High Places, Bonus Force point, Mysterious Cyberware/Bioware, Police Record, State of the Art model.
- Bonus Attribute Point is limited to 3 per character, only one per attribute, and CANNOT exceed racial maxima. Bonus skill points are limited to 3 per character, no more than one per skill. Allergy flaws MUST be approved by the VS Coordinator before they can be taken. Phobia flaws must be approved by the VS coordinator before they can be taken.

Characters may NOT exceed racial stat maxima for any reason. If this affects your character, fix it before the next time you play. Generally, if something isn't specifically included in the VS rules, assume it's specifically excluded. That way, you won't be disappointed when asked to change your character.

All members of the Tyger's Tail magical group are reminded that you lose 1 good karma from every run to represent time spent working for the group. The flip side to this is you get to initiate for less karma as a member of a group. You may NOT ignore this stricture (or any other).

Totems

The only permitted totems are in the core rules, the Paradise Lost module, and Spider. Spider shamans MUST be female and will be ultimately subject to all the problems of following Spider.

Ordeals

These are unavailable unless the scenario says so.

Common Allergies

The ONLY common food allergy in VS is soy. Spices and red meat (which apparently some people have taken) are not common in the 2060s unless you have a luxury lifestyle (not possible in VS due to run limitations). If your character has a

"common" allergy to a food other than soy, change the allergy to soy or adjust the benefits you gained.

Huge Force spells

You may learn a spell at any force you can afford up to a base of 11 if you're paying for it and have the karma (effective max is 14 under SR3). Self-taught spells are limited to Force 11 as well (but you still need the karma). The Tyger's Tail magical group has a rating 11 Hermetic Library and a Rating 11 Medicine Lodge for the use of members. Remember when casting spells that any spell cast at a force above your Magic Rating, or casting any spell in astral space, causes Physical Drain. SR3 rules do not allow damage from drain to be healed magically. Additionally, spells cast at effective force above 12 (which is pretty darned big) will have a chance of attracting astral attention from one or more Megacorps (who don't like to see that kind of power in other people's control). The bigger the effective force, the more chance of being noticed (18 minus the spell's force, rolled in secret on 1d6 by the GM at casting time). This doesn't mean you can't do it, just be prepared for the possible consequences.

If your character has one or more spells above Force 11 (base), reduce it to Force 11 and return the additional good karma to your character sheet or spend it on another spell.

Ally Spirits.

Yes, you can have them. Designs must be submitted to the VS coordinator. Once approved, make the appropriate rolls in front of the event coordinator at your next con. If your ally is a familiar, you must state that at creation time and put it on the design.

Initiate limits.

None. Your character can grade as high as you can afford. On the flip side, every time an initiate goes on a run, one or more Megacorps may notice the character. The higher the grade, the greater the chance (target will be 10 minus initiate grade, rolled on 1d6 secretly by the GM at the start of the game). Noticing doesn't *necessarily* mean they'll do anything, (but if it's Aztechnology, they will come after the character to use in their blood magic rituals).

Spell design.

You can design your own spells, as long as your character has the Magical Theory skill, access to a library or lodge of the appropriate rating, and the spell is approved by the VS coordinator. Your spells may be taught to other characters (you can charge them for it—in character—if you like).

Forming a magical group.

You can't. VS characters have access to one magical group, and that's it. The potential for powergaming is too strong to allow other groups with potentially unbalancing strictures.

New Books

As of January 1, 1999, the following books and options will be in effect, with restrictions as noted. Books not included on the allowed list may only be used as author tools, but are not available to PCs.

- *Rigger 2*. Convert all vehicles and drones to Rigger 2 rules. RBB will no longer be allowed.
- *Awakenings*. All Awakenings spells and Physical adept powers are allowed. Physical magicians are not allowed, nor are any other Awakenings rules or options.
- *Beyond the Shadows*. Edges and Flaws are allowed as of January 1st, 1999, with the restrictions noted elsewhere. No other part of this book is allowed.
- *Cyberpirates*. Subject to Street Index and Availability rules.

Tyger Teams

Now, the good news. You can register a Tyger Team of between 4 and 8 characters (inclusive) if you regularly play with the same folks. Why would you want to do this? Simple. There is a limit of 100k per person per run. However, when at least half the players at a table are from a registered team, they may pool their shares of any money/loot and take an item (from the module) that would normally have to be sold and the proceeds split up. For example, the loot for an extraction may include a vehicle worth 250k, or a magical focus. Most tables would hock it and split the money, but a Tyger Team may wish to keep it (even if it primarily benefits one character) for the good of the team. Such items will have certificates, but (for now) they won't be limited to first runs.

A couple of potential problems may crop up. If a team splits across two tables and takes the valuable item both times, that team will have both certificates taken away. The only exception to this will be if the members realize what they've done and voluntarily give up one certificate before it is used. If teams play the same game more than once in an attempt to gain additional certificates, that team will lose all the certificates from that game. If this becomes a major problem, certificates will be limited to first runs.

Due to the long lead time to get into the POLYHEDRON® Magazine, VS updates will now become effective as soon as posted on the website. VS event coordinators should look at the site and download any recently changed pages before running a module at a con. For players, judges, and coordinators who don't have internet access, ask your friends or visit an internet café. As a last resort, drop me a postcard at PO Box 3391, BMDC, ACT 2617, Australia and I'll mail the updates to you. Allow at least two weeks as mail from the US to Australia and back again is not reliably quick.

❑

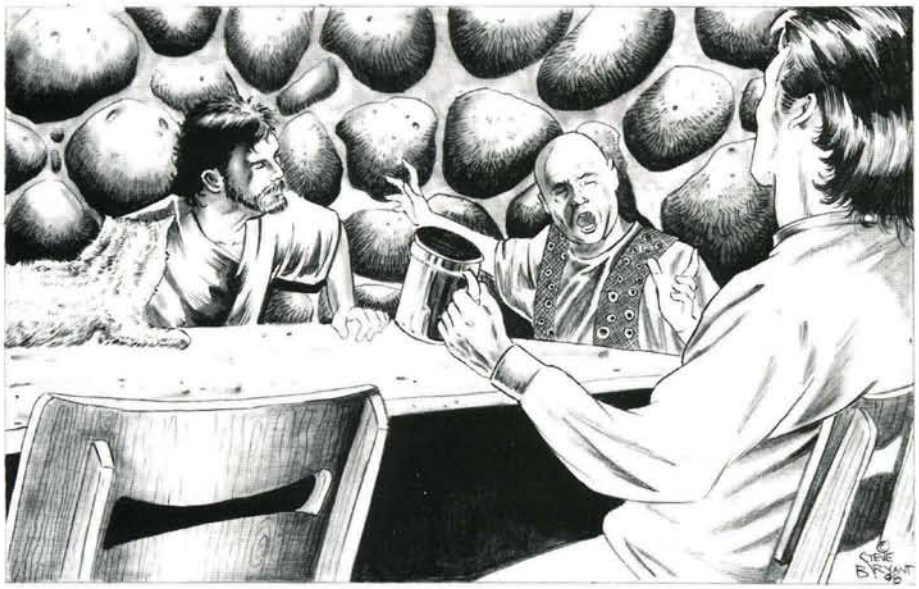
Seattle Factoid:

Teriyaki (not soy) seems to be the most common food here, judging by the number of restaurants devoted to it. Here teriyaki is a food much like barbecue is a food in the southern midwest.

Elminster's Everwinking Eye

The Border Kingdoms

by Ed Greenwood



Luthbaern

Our Volo-and-Elminster guided tour of the Border Kingdoms continues with a visit to a place that's pronounced "LOOTH-bear-nn" or "Luth-BEAR-nn."

This walled, wary town of traders and crafters stands on the Westwater Way, southwest of spell-guarded and prosperous Felshroun, and northeast of the Barony of Blacksaddle. It's a cobbled, stone-and-slate roof place where nary a blade of grass is allowed to waste space that can be devoted to work—and making money.

"Welcoming" is a word never applied to what one Borderer dubbed 'the Sty of Fat Merchants.' The phrase settled like a shroud over the town, and sometimes confuses travelers who think 'Fat Merchant' refers to Sembia. Some Borderers call Luthbaern 'the Fat Sty' (as in, "Oh—yer a Fat Styer, eh?").

Luthbaern is a crowded town. Tall stone buildings stand shoulder to shoulder, balconies almost touching. Many local tales feature midnight meetings facilitated by an easy step, high aloft, from one house to another—and in a famous chase, a thief fled through no less than twelve houses in this manner, hotly pursued by sword-waving bodyguards, before escaping!

Luthbaernar architecture runs to dark, ornate wood paneling and tapestries, and almost everyone lives above their business or rooms rented out to others.

Luthbaernar love to work hard and play hard—barrels of drink and wagons of meat are consumed nightly. As a result, they tend to be fat, most sporting large, ball-shaped bellies. The merchants among them also tend to be both successful and pompous, and dress in finery (lace at cuffs and collars). Most Luthbaernar are never far from food and drink (a belt flagon and a pouch holding cheese, sausage, and sticklike, spiced 'ready rolls' of fried bread), and spend a lot of time talking at top speed and waving their arms about expressively. A traveling trader once described arguing Luthbaernar merchants as "two roosters strutting up belly to belly and shrieking insults at each other." They tend to be suspicious of strangers (everyone in Faerûn's after their money!), and to take elaborate precautions against thieves and swindlers.

In recent years, Luthbaern has been overshadowed by, but also seen reflected benefits of, the growing prosperity of nearby Felshroun. Trade has enriched Luthbaernar because they truly know how to work.

Luthbaern is justly proud of the goods it produces. Of old, furniture and carpentry-work predominated: barrels, chests, chairs, beds, and tall cupboards (both of the openshelf sort and the 'manydoors' type). Recently, earthenware, glass-glazed crockery, and fine-sewn tapestries and rugs have joined the Luthbaernar output. 'Swift and fine' is a common town motto; it refers to producing goods, not to personal character.

Luthbaernar seldom travel far from their businesses—which they must, they feel, keep a wary eye on—but often 'hire' passing traders to take note of new trends and goods, and pass on what they've seen on their next stop in Luthbaern. This information is acted on, producing new goods under the hands of sweating hired crafters.

Luthbaernar who work as crafters may seem little more than slaves to an outsider, but their uprisings in the past have led to two firmly-observed local customs that make them better treated than elsewhere in Faerûn: the 'topcoin' principle and the 'fallowrest' rule.

Topcoining means that whatever rate of pay a worker has achieved must be matched or exceeded by others seeking to hire the worker away from the first

employer (all such rates are registered with the town Registrar and recorded on documents, which every crafter keeps several hidden copies of).

The Fallowrest Rule states that each crafter must be granted as much time off work as they spend working, in every month—if they desire it; most do. (Using one's "fallow" time to work for a rival of one's employer is severely frowned upon, but using it to run a sideline business that doesn't directly compete with daily work done for one's employer is encouraged and even expected.)

The ability to see consequences, costs, and how to do things better seems inborn in native Luthbaernar; they're "ordained by the gods to be merchants." Even the lowliest crafters have monies invested in the concerns of others, sponsoring more caravan wagons and new businesses across Faerûn than any other group of folk—even larger, wealthier, and far better known Sembia.

This is possible because most Luthbaernar needn't worry about defending their property or keeping a little by for bad times. Local Waukeenar clergy, bereft of spells, have kept useful by running shelterhouses for the temporarily penniless (and are well-loved locally as a result). Every shop or warehouse owner has a hired bodyguard or three, but it's assumed that the wards set upon the town, and the one who created and watches over them, will prevent brigand raids, large-scale attacks, and thieving magic.

This mysterious guardian is known as the Belted Mage because he wears an enchanted belt that combines magics of flight, personal disguise, invisibility, and fire resistance. When he wants to be identified, everyone knows his device (a barrel in flames, enclosed in a circle of rope). Most of the time he looks like just one more fat, bustling merchant—but the rings on his fingers wink with real enchantments, not merely little half-magics that only make them light up to impress onlookers (a fashion favored by Luthbaernar of wealth and pretentions).

The Belted Mage is the town's protector: by his spells, fires can ignite in the city only in specified workshop areas (to allow forges, crucibles, and cooking—which, as a result, few Luthbaernar do at home), nothing can overfly the city, storm lightning and rains veer aside to fall elsewhere, and no shapechangings (magical or natural alterations of the essential appearance and nature of a body) can occur within Luthbaern—attempts to use such powers or magics simply fail.

The name, nature, and origin of the Belted Mage remain mysteries to Luthbaernar—though persistent rumors encompass the truth: he is a renegade Red Wizard of Thay, come to live in seclusion from the strife of his homeland, and study magic in peace while growing steadily more rich.

His name is Izazrem Thal; his true level, capabilities, and alignment are unknown. He sometimes adopts other shapes than his customary fat, gruff, untidily-moustached and large-nosed mien; a slimmer, raven-haired, dark-eyed form is thought (correctly) to approach his true appearance.

The Belted Mage is always spinning new spells to augment his existing wards, but remains quite secretive about just what they enable him (or the unattended wards) to do. Luthbaernar seem to trust him in this—and those that don't swiftly fall silent, for reasons unknown.

It's increasingly evident that Thal can trace items (specific items he's seen or handled, not "all rubies" or "any wagon that is blue or more than a certain size") so long as they're within his wards (the city walls).

From time to time Thayans show up in Luthbaern, but it's not thought that the Belted Mage welcomes them or deals with them for personal business or hidden aims. Rather, he seems irritated by the very presence of possible Red Wizards or their agents, and uses his wards to spy on them.

Most Thayans (and indeed, many of the more powerful mages who travel through Luthbaern—for none linger long) keep '"outwall" as much as possible, just beyond the Belted Mage's reach.

Paddock space for visiting caravans, market stalls, and stockyards are all set up around the outside wall of Luthbaern, in a muddy ring that's become known as, well, "the Muddy Ring."

Outside the Ring's constant bustle, Luthbaern is surrounded by prosperous, verdant farms, whose proprietors—barring blight, war, or stupid farming—have their wealth guaranteed for life, feeding the busy folk of Luthbaern. These farmers are referred to as "Luthlanders," and keep goats, cattle, and pigs as well as planting food crops (tubers and sprouts in particular). Luthland cheese, known as "sharpsair," is white, crumbly, and fiery in taste, almost like a hot mustard battling for taste supremacy with a hot radish. Luthbaernar love it, and even serve it in cubes doused in mustard, to work up thirsts for wine and stronger quaffs.

Luthlander farmers arrive outwall before dawn, and sleepy citizens shuffle out to buy from them (those too haughty, weary, or busy to make the journey will have to buy produce—at prices almost a third higher—from "street-runners" who bring the goods to the shops of clients (by request, not hawking wares to passersby—and not needing to).

Luthbaern comes as a great surprise to many travelers in the Border Kingdoms—and a godsend, if they need something custom-made in a hurry!

❑

"So I rode to Luthbaern.

—Haldimer Hurezan

I didn't want to; nobody ever does."

Factor of the Blingblade Coster of Murann

The Black Book Of A Garrulous Merchant

Year of the Prince

City Stories

Mother's Cupboard

by James C. Alpeter Jr.

Near the center of the Harbor district is a small shop under an unimposing sign which reads "Mother's Cupboard, Apothecary and Remedies." The building attached to the sign has two stories and is made of stone. Flower boxes adorn every window sill on the building and unusual plants and herbs grow in the boxes. Mixing with the harbor's other smells, the unusual scents provide strange smells for the nose of all who enter.

Services

The business provides two main services to sailors and those who wish to avoid the notice of priests. The first service is home remedies for common problems, a few of which are listed below: The DM is encouraged to devise other common physical problems that priests will not solve because they are trivial or beyond/beneath their scope.

Remedy for Drunkenness: 1 ep
Remedy for Infertility: 5gp
Remedy for Common Colds: 1 gp
Remedy for Stomach Ailments: 1 ep
Remedy for Hiccups: 1 sp
Remedy for Headaches: 1 sp

The second service is healing wounds, diseases, and poisons. Those preferring not to worship a deity and in need of healing can frequent "Mother's" establishment (It was noted that Mother did a booming business during the Time of Troubles.).

The heroes will be treated well by Mother's care. Although the curative process can take 2d12 days, Mother's services are quite effective. Healing, disease, and poison treatment services are limited to natural diseases and poisons such as smallpox, spider venoms, and so on. Mother cannot heal magical diseases, such as lycanthropy or mummy rot, or poisons native to a plane other than the Prime Material Plane. Characters under her care regain hit points at a rate of five per day. These types of treatments cost 50 gp per day and Mother has room to treat up to six individuals at a time. The poor people and orphans of Ravens Bluff are treated for free.

The Cupboard

When one enters the door, a bell sweetly chimes. Customers enter into the main store and office. Here is where Mother keeps her over-the-counter remedies for drunkenness, headaches, and such.

Behind the main office is her work area where she mixes remedies and so on. She also sleeps on a cot here when patients are in the isolation rooms so that she can care for them more easily in the night.

Next to this are the small isolation rooms for her patients to stay while they are receiving Mother's loving care. These rooms are kept dry and can be chilled or warmed as necessary. Stairs up and down are at the rear of the building.

Downstairs, Mother keeps her secret work area for dissections and cold storage. As needed, she barters for a local mage to come and cast *ice storm* or (normally) barters for ice to be delivered from the Ice House (POLYHEDRON #53) to keep the basement sufficiently chilled. She keeps cadavers for her research in secret chambers and compartments (see below), which she keeps cool with ice. She can store up to four cadavers at a time in these compartments.

Upstairs are Mother's lodgings and office. Just off the stairs is the tea room and the kitchen. Next to the kitchen sits her office and den, where she keeps her notes about her research hidden in a fold-top desk that is locked with an excellent quality lock. Her bedroom is located over the main store. The bedroom is nicely decorated, striking a balance between spartan and comfortable.

"Mother" (Josselyn) Phelia

Human Female 0 level
Age: 57
Height:4'11"
Weight: 97 lbs.
Hair: White
Eyes: Brown

Josselyn Phelia is is native to Ravens Bluff and known to all as "Mother Phelia" or simply "Mother". Never knowing her father, Josselyn's mother was employed as a secretary for a counting house during the day and as an exotic dancer at night. What little time Josselyn and her mother had together was spent teaching Josselyn how to read and write. Thus Josselyn's mother went to work and Josselyn would read books about flowers and herbs. The older Phelia's lifestyle taught Josselyn a distaste for romance and men who frequent low level dives to gaze on scantily clad women.

To compensate, Josselyn threw herself into the studies of healing and herbalism. Her search for knowledge was to assuage her own pain by helping others. However, Josselyn soon became frustrated by the lack of knowledge about the body's internal structures and started to dissect small animals and take notes

Josselyn finally slipped over the edge of sanity when her "upright" husband was found with a dancing girl. Slowly, Josselyn poisoned her husband to make his death seem to be of natural causes. Then she faked his burial. Afterward, Josselyn took notes on her first human dissection study. Josselyn has since lived a schizophrenic life helping the disadvantaged while at the same time conducting her experiments. She believes herself to be aligned with good forces, but her true alignment is slowly slipping towards evil because of her experiments.

Mother is a worshiper of Lathander, but has a hidden shrine to the now-dead power, Myrkul, in her cellar. Such devotion on Mother's part may seem strange, but the only time she worships any power is those times that she calls on Lath-

ander's help for healing or last ditch efforts to placate Myrkul to save a life. Mother doesn't recognize or worship Cyric, despite the fact that he is slowly bending her to his will.

As a healer and herbalist, Mother receives no penalties to these proficiency checks because she is steeped in knowledge of the body and its workings. Mother's familiarity with remedies is also vast. Nonetheless, she continues to obtain bodies of all types of dead humanoids in hopes of finding knowledge that will cause her to be revered after her death.

Mother has developed an immunity to all naturally occurring diseases since she has been exposed to most of them in her three decades of treating the sick. Working with anti-venoms and toxins has given Mother a +2 to poison saves due to absorbing so much of such substances through her skin. When making constitution checks against new diseases, poisons, and system shocks, Mother should be treated as if having a constitution of 18.

Her familiarity with healing and herbalism proficiencies is so expert that she will only fail such rolls on a roll of 20. After many winters of treating the sick, dying, and diseased, not to mention her experiments, there is probably no one in Ravens Bluff as familiar with the body, healing, and natural remedies as she.

Adventure Ideas

- Someone has found out Mother's secret and wants her notes on anatomy. The heroes could be hired to protect Mother's establishment by the healer herself.
- Alternately, the PCs could be hired to get past others to get the notes.
- The Church of Lathander has heard some disturbing rumors about a seemingly devout worshiper and wish to lay the rumors to rest. The PCs are hired to investigate the rumors about Mother only to prove the rumors true to those who do not wish to believe the evidence.

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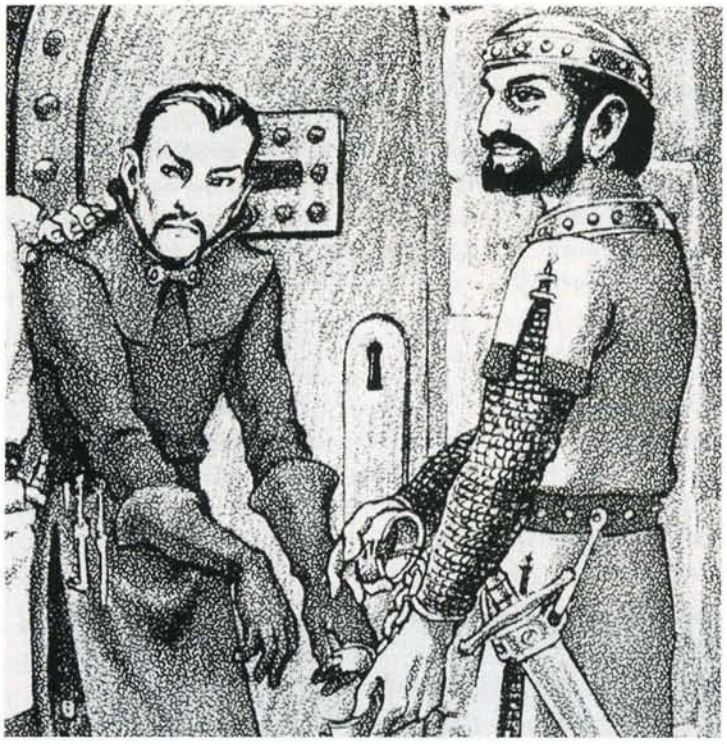


Almost every fantasy roleplaying game campaign that deals extensively with cities includes encounters with the city guard, the local sheriff, or some other representative of the law.

Law enforcement can play many different roles in a campaign. At one extreme, PCs are actual members of the guard, while at the other, the watch is a major antagonist. As a DM designs a setting or fleshes out a purchased campaign setting, careful thought should be devoted to the exact role of law in the campaign.

Crime Doesn't Pay

The Role of Law in a Campaign by Adam H. Morse

Fundamentally, the law can play three types of roles in an RPG. The law can be an ally of the PCs, a control limiting PC action, or an antagonist to oppose the PCs.

The Law as Ally

The most familiar role for law-enforcement in campaigns focusing on heroic PCs is as an ally. When constructing a legal system for this style of campaign, a DM should create a relatively fair and just legal system. When the law is an ally, PCs typically do not want to commit crimes.

The sentences received by NPC criminals should not make the players uncomfortable. Medieval legal codes were frequently quite harsh, and almost invariably placed a higher emphasis on physical punishment, such as flogging, mutilation, and execution than modern legal codes.

In the real world, prisons were used in the Middle Ages almost exclusively for debtors, who were kept under relatively light guard and forced to work to pay off their debts. Prisons were also for political prisoners who were sometimes imprisoned when execution or exile was politically inconvenient.

Although historicity can be valuable, many modern players would not accept a just and good government sentencing people to severe mutilation or painful executions. Ensuring that the players can accept the punishments as just is more important than historical accuracy. Consequently, this sort of campaign may extensively use prisons because it is often useful to be able to sentence NPC criminals the PCs have captured to long prison sentences. It feels just to modern sensibilities, gives the players a sense of accomplishment that an immediate sentence like flogging might not, and has the added advantage of allowing the villain to remain alive to pester the PCs again after an escape. Authenticity is only strictly necessary in historical campaigns (the law in a Roman campaign should resemble Roman law).

The law can be used in several ways in a "law as ally" campaign; the principal differences from a design perspective are the strength and effectiveness of the law enforcers.

In some games, the PCs are part of the guard, either for short-term stints or as a permanent career. In this sort of campaign, it is useful to have the watch appear strong and effective elsewhere, but force the PCs to be the complete power of the law in their specific cases. The key is to ensure that the PCs feel significant, but not surrounded by incompetents. Weak or beginning parties will be assigned significant cases, but not particularly dangerous ones. Strong parties may be only sent for in the most difficult cases.

Another common campaign type has the PCs acting to help the watch deal with tricky cases, either as mercenaries or because they are heroes. The guards in this sort of campaign should generally be weak; the reason they turn to the heroes is that they can't solve the problems themselves. This works well for rural areas; the entire law enforcement presence in a town may be a sheriff, perhaps with a deputy or two. A village may have no law enforcers,

relying on either groups of residents or the local lord to deal with crime. If players have a decided preference for certain types of play, standard law enforcers can still take over when necessary; for example, if the players are problem-solvers but dislike combat, the watch can call them in to help with an investigation, but offer back-up when the PCs are ready to make an arrest.

Sometimes, the watch serves as a resource to help the PCs deal with certain problems. The most obvious example is disposing of captured enemies. After foiling the villain's nefarious plan, the heroes can simply turn him over to the guard and forget about it. City guards can also provide extra muscle if the PCs decide to take on a problem that's tougher than they are. The watch can frequently be quite powerful in these sorts of campaigns; however, they should not be too available, lest PCs solve every problem by calling for the guard. Lowering PC rewards as a penalty for calling the watch can help alleviate this problem.

The Law as Control

Most DMs consider certain PC actions unacceptable. The law can be used to prevent the players from making some of those choices. As an extreme example, the PCs may be prevented from murdering characters they dislike by the fear of punishment. The law often plays this sort of role in addition to playing other roles. PCs who are allied with the law know that if they break the law, more powerful groups will deal with them. The law can also prevent certain crimes while serving as an antagonist when PCs commit others.

DMs should observe three key elements to designing the law in a "law as control" campaign. First, the law must be reasonably just. If the players view the law as unduly harsh ("The penalty for all crimes is death!"), they will view the regime as a corrupt enemy and fight it. Although PCs fighting against an oppressive lord is a fine style of campaign, the law no longer serves the purpose of preventing certain actions.

Second, the punishments must be a threat. If PCs can break the law and only pay a slight fine, they will occasionally be willing to pay the price. The desire to combine fair law with a sufficient deterrent can often be served by a prison sentence. Ten years in prison for a serious crime seems reasonable to the player, but has the same in-game effect as execution: the character is removed from play.

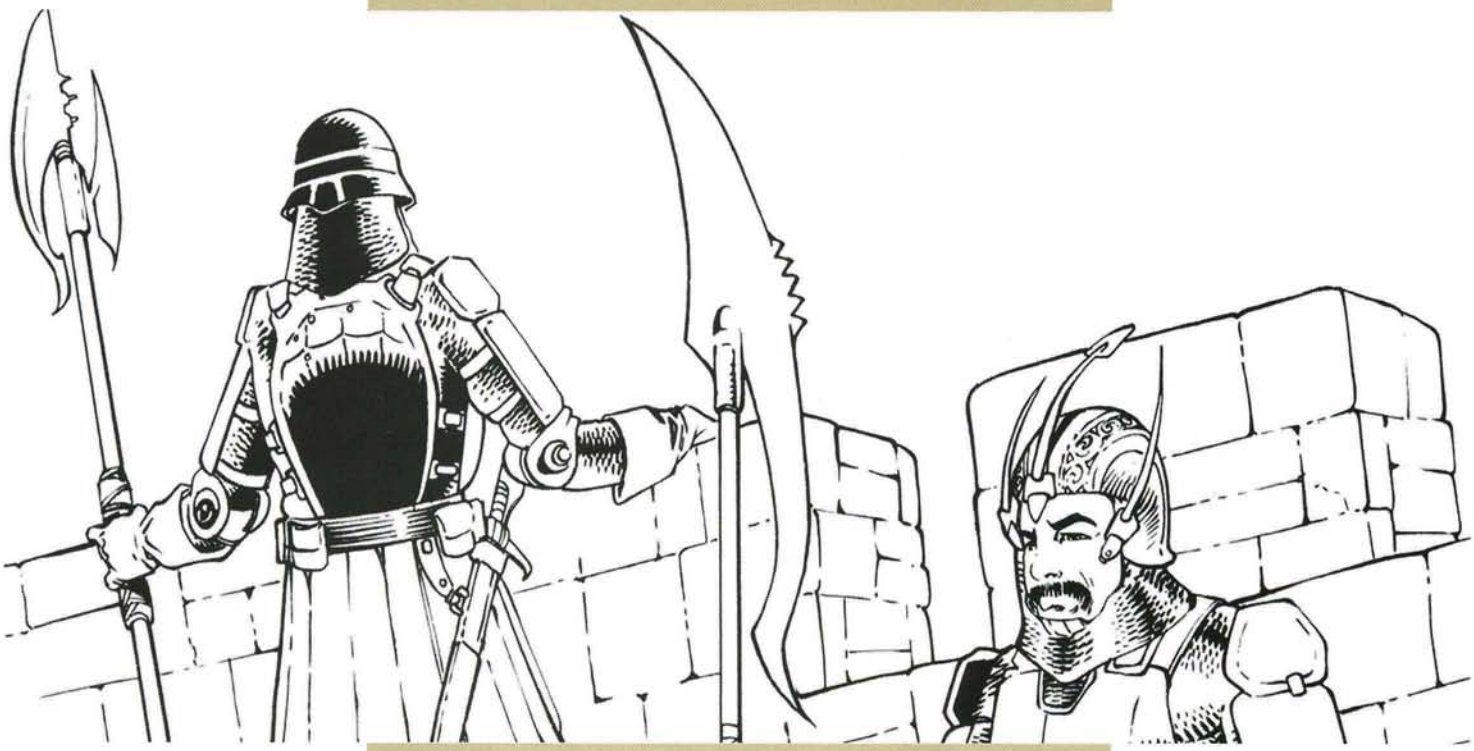
Third, the watch must be strong and effective. If the PCs believe they can beat the law, it won't restrict their actions. Consequently, in order for the law to be a control, guards need to be powerful, numerous, and good at investigations. Giving the watch ample magic resources can be very helpful.

When the law is intended primarily as a control, it may sometimes be desirable to allow PCs to break it if they are clever. Although it is tempting to have the guard be invincible, sometimes PCs will come up with plans that can't be stopped simply. This is not inherently a problem. If it happens rarely, the law is functioning as a control, but not an omnipotent one. If it happens frequently, the law is functioning as an antagonist.

The Law as Antagonist

Some campaigns use the law as another opponent for the PCs. The power of law enforcers is easy to determine in this sort of game. The power level of the guard should be regulated the same as the power level of any enemy. The guard should not outclass the PCs so much that they can't effectively oppose it, but it should also take effort and difficulty to beat them.

One typical problem encountered in all of these styles of campaigns is adjusting to increasing PC power. As PCs go up in level and gain magic items, the common guards who were once their matches cease to be a threat. Although it is tempting to simply increase the power of the watch, making all the 1st level guards 2nd level, and so forth, this is rarely a good idea. It becomes ridiculous that guards who the PCs could beat at 2nd level are still a challenge at 8th level. The solution is to adjust who they actually deal with, as they attract the notice of ever higher authorities. Thus, the high level party can easily defeat the guardsman walking the beat, but they have to deal



with special teams assembled specifically to deal with them. Eventually, city authorities may give way to special royal teams or skilled mercenaries and bounty hunters. This progression of opponents helps maintain the logic of the game world, while still challenging the PCs.

Some campaigns pit the PCs against a cruel and oppressive law. Whether the law throughout the entire empire is unjust and evil, or a small area is terrorized by a ruthless sheriff, the PCs must fight it. Typically, this is the style of campaign where the law has the harshest penalties; consequences are monstrous, and the PCs avoid them by never being caught or making swift escapes.

The key to successfully running a campaign with an evil guard is to provide weaknesses. Generally, the watch is more numerous than the PCs in this type of game. The PCs must compensate through cleverness. Any lasting victory requires extensive build up. The law in this style of campaign should usually not be very good at investigation. The PCs can commit their crimes fighting the oppressors and then escape, provided they are clever about it. This sort of game also includes more direct confrontation; the objective is not merely to commit crime, but to defeat the guard. Consequently, building a resistance and gathering power to overthrow the oppressors is the order of the day.

Sometimes, however, the guard is not evil, but still an opponent. The typical campaign of this sort focuses on thieves, but it includes any game where the PCs sometimes decide to go around the law. This campaign requires the most detailed development of the law and the guard. The PCs need to be able to assemble information about what they can and cannot get away with. The DM should make it clear if any behavior will cause serious legal troubles. For example, theft may be punished lightly, but killing guards may quickly summon overwhelming odds.

In this sort of campaign, it is common for PCs to be caught and punished, without being killed. The legal penalties must be designed carefully; imprisonment is usually a bad option, because it eliminates the character. However, if escape is easy, then PCs aren't punished for being caught, which removes the pressure to succeed.

Similarly, punishments such as flogging and public humiliation like the stocks are poor choices. Although they may allow for interesting roleplay, they do not meaningfully penalize the character. Fines and other material penalties often work the best. A player may not care when you flog her thief PC, but if you take away her *ring of free action*....

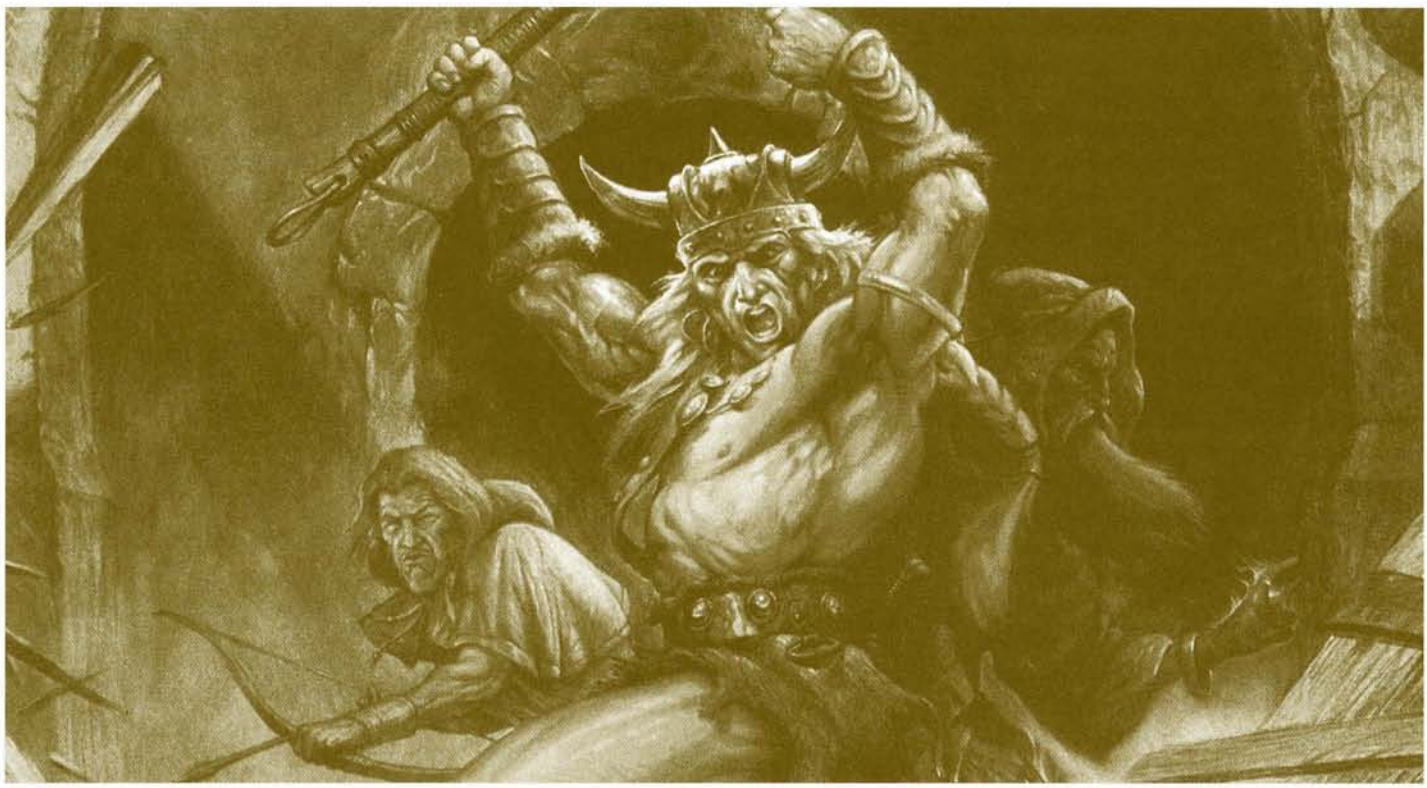
Forfeiture of magic items or wealth is an excellent penalty. It can be scaled nicely, by confiscating a trinket or two for minor offenses, and taking away all of the criminal's property for more severe crimes or repeat offenses. It is also important to consider the effect of magic. In some settings, due to the availability of resurrection and regeneration, removing a limb is more severe than execution!

The guard must also be carefully designed in this sort of campaign. The DM needs to determine what the guards' strengths and weaknesses are, and convey these to the PCs. Typically, the guard is numerous and not terribly powerful, though powerful enough that 2:1 or 3:1 odds are sufficient. The way to avoid capture is still cleverness, but the sides tend to be a little more evenly matched. Since arrest is merely bad, not disastrous, capture can be a reasonable threat.

Note that this sort of campaign is very similar to many campaigns without formal legal systems. Regardless of whether the opponent is the local watch, a knight sent to investigate a crime, a mob of aggrieved commoners, or the local thieves guild providing "protection," the results are the same.

After deciding on the role of the law in a game, a DM must still make many design decisions about the law. However, clearly defining the role the law will help guide these decisions in a productive way. By designing the law to fill a specific niche, the DM can create a fun ally or enemy, with an appropriate amount of power to fill the needs of the campaign. ❑

All I Really Need to Know I Learned from the AD&D® game:



Always know the rules. You are never more susceptible than when you are ignorant. ✪ Just when you've learned the rules, someone revises them. ✪ You can't have too many tools or too much equipment. The second you remove it, you'll need it. ✪ Walking around carrying 80+ lbs. of gear sounds easier than it actually is. ✪ It's okay to beat people up if you have the moral justification. ✪ If you do beat someone up, you can keep their stuff. ✪ When you're outclassed in every way, bravado is your only salvation. ✪ If the treasure looks too good to be true, it definitely is. ✪ No matter how carefully you prepare alternatives to a situation, the people you've prepared for will always do something you hadn't thought of. ✪ Being richer than most people is a lot of fun. ✪ In any group, the safest place is in the middle. ✪ Nothing interesting happens unless someone does something really stupid. ✪ Sometimes, the best way to relieve stress is to hit things. ✪ People whose abilities are extreme are much more powerful/important than those who are well-balanced. ✪ Never open a door if you can get someone else to do it for you. ✪ Given the right circumstances and motivations, everyone has a devious side. ✪ Role-playing is life. We play many roles. If we could just play them as well as that half-elf ranger. ✪ 50' of rope is never enough. ✪ When people work together, they can achieve almost anything.

[thanks to P. Dunford, Kevin Kulp, Ramsey Lundock, Mason A. Porter and someone who didn't identify himself.]

FORGOTTEN REALMS®

ADVENTURE

Audition

by Tom Prusa

An adventure for six characters of 7th to 9th level set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign setting

The local thieves' guild, Brandon's Band of Thieves, has become too powerful. Though they maintain a reputation of robbing the rich to give to the poor, the city council wants them eliminated. Many members of the council are among the rich. A direct foray proved unsuccessful, so the Realms' most famous secret society, the Harpers, secretly sends a group of adventurers to infiltrate the band and gather evidence to bring it down.

As the adventure begins, the PCs are told that they have been trying out for membership in Brandon's Band of Thieves. This guild has quite a reputation among poor people as a "rob from the rich and give to the poor" band of thieves. Actually, nothing has gone to the poor in a number of years.

The band has been successful enough to draw the attention of some very important personages. These important people have decided that the band must be stopped. However, to do that a list of the members is needed, as well as the true identity of Brandon. Several agents were sent, but none returned. So, these important personages decided to send truly undercover agents. These infiltrators are the player characters.

When the adventure starts, the PCs all believe that they have one final test of teamwork to pass. This is partly true, the next day's tests will deal with the group as a team, but there are actually two tests for the team, and one for each individual PC. If all of these tests are passed, the group will be accepted into Brandon's Band of Thieves.

The first test is the training run. This is a series of tunnels underground that are laid out to provide a test of the various skills of the party. There are six major obstacles. How they handle this challenge is up to them.

After making it through the training run, the group is given its real test. The PCs must travel to the nearby village of Clarkswell and plan and execute their own robbery. They must return with jewels or gems or other treasure worth at least 5,000 gp. In addition, each of them is given a private mission, which must be carried out without anyone else knowing. The private mission is actually more of an excuse to get them to act independently than anything else.

If the PCs (or players) have a moral problem with planning a robbery, an out has also been provided. They can track down and defeat a band of raiding giants. The giants are carrying more than enough gold and platinum to meet their needs.

Upon reaching the town of Clarkswell, the PCs find that they are quite conspicuous. The town has only a few businesses, and there are only two treasures in town that even begin to satisfy the 5,000 gp value limit. The first is a large emerald set the mayor's necklace, and the second is a diamond worn by the only powerful mage in town. The PCs may investigate, but sooner or later they will have to plan and execute a robbery of one or the other. Since the thieves guild does not consider itself an assassin's guild, killing a victim is considered automatic failure of the test. The guild knows that killings stir up the authorities, and the PCs are warned that if they engage in wanton bloodshed, the guild itself will turn them over to the authorities.

If the PCs are successful, they can gain membership in the guild, and succeed in their true mission.

To fit this into your campaign, you will have to set up the PCs with their mission of infiltrating the band.

PLAYERS' BACKGROUND

Well, tomorrow is the day. All of you have been trying out for admittance to Brandon's Band of Thieves. The guild you have been trying to get into is no ordinary guild.

Brandon's Band is well known for giving part of their take to the poor, and for never robbing anyone but the rich. The members of the guild are also quite well paid. No one knows exactly who is in the guild, or even what Brandon really looks like. He must be smart though, for his band has been operating for years, and never have more than one or two thieves been picked up and jailed. Tomorrow you get your chance to join this elite group.

The tests so far have been difficult, but nothing you couldn't handle. You have seen six members of the guild so far, and the remote, apparently random places where the testing occurred makes you feel good about the organization you are going to be joining. This band is not going to be caught easily.

As you sit eating breakfast at the inn, one of the members of the band, Allfraidus, comes in and rubs his nose. Following the pre-arranged signal, you all finish your breakfast, and one by one, saunter outside. You follow Allfraidus to a barn, where he motions you all in. After checking for eavesdroppers, he gathers you in a circle.

Allfraidus speaks in the low whisper he always does, forcing you all to lean closer. "You have almost passed all of the tests. But Brandon looks not only for technical merit, but for a band that can work together. Today you must prove that you can use your skills to complement others. You six, as the best of the current applicants, will work together in a group. There are a few simple rules to the tests which follow. First, Brandon does not believe in leaving behind members who have been captured or injured. These people are usually arrested, and with some justification, tell everything they know about the band. Therefore, if you do not all come back from this test, none of you gain admittance to the guild. You all succeed or fail together.

"Second, NO KILLINGS. Murders and other violence just stir up the authorities too much. Anyone who kills a victim on this mission will be turned over to the authorities and probably be hanged, as they should be. A good member of Brandon's band can accomplish his goals without a lot of bloodshed and slaughter.

"Third. Before you can be admitted to the guild, you will meet Brandon himself, and reveal your real name to him. Only Brandon knows the identity of everyone in the guild, and if he can't be trusted with it, no one can.

"Now, the tests. Somewhere in this building is an entrance to an underground tunnel. Along the tunnel are various, shall we say, obstacles for you to get past. Be warned, some of the obstacles are deadly. We use this tunnel as a training run for young thieves and others, but for this test, all of the obstacles are armed and deadly. Don't be stupid. Stupid dead people don't make it into the guild. Also, you will be watched every step of the way. This is a test of teamwork, not individual accomplishment, so work together with your skills. Together, you are a force to be reckoned with.

"After completing the run, you are to proceed north of Arabel for 55 miles. There you will find the small town of Clarkswell. You must plan and execute your own job, returning with not less than 5,000 gp worth of treasure, gems and jewels preferred, of course. The rules I mentioned before apply very strongly here, and for true success, you will do the job and never let it be known that there was a robbery. I will be accompanying you, to see that the robbery is planned and executed successfully. I will be an observer only, this job is up to you. Also, each of you will have a private mission, to prove that you are capable of accomplishing something on your own. Therefore, I need to see each of you individually. I'll start with the group leader."

Mission 1
Your mission is to act as a true thief. We expect you to come back with one item from each of the others in your group. It can be as little as a copper piece, but you need to get something from everyone. You must not let the thefts be traced back to you. If everyone succeeds, you are expected to return the items you took.

Mission 2
The accumulation of magic items is very important. There is a powerful mage in Clarkswell, an old recluse. Your private mission is to get any item of magic from the mage. Don't forget the rule about violence. We don't want half the town torn apart in a fireball battle. We want some subtlety.

Mission 3
You must not spend a copper on your mission, for food, lodging, or anything else. Ideally, you should be able to con others into paying for it for you, but charming others is also acceptable. You may not steal to pay for it. While stealing is not looked down upon, this is not your private mission.

Mission 4
Your mission is to make the officials of Clarkswell believe you to be a noble. As proof of your success, a gift must be given, from an official in Clarkswell, as to a noble.

Mission 5
Engage one of Clarkswell's more powerful guards in a private duel, and then defeat him. The combat must be honorable, no killing, therefore he must challenge you. Since such a small town can have only a small guard, the chances of meeting a fighter who is a challenge to you is small, so defeat is not acceptable. You must prove that you can win, as well.

Mission 6
Prove that you can hold your own against a powerful mage. Since Ivan Ivanhoff of Baldur's Gate has shown more power than you so far, you must outdo him at every turn. The success of your private mission is simple. Upon your return, the other four members of the group will be asked which of you was the more powerful mage. If three of them reply with your name, you have succeeded. Good Luck.

THE TRAINING RUN

The entire training run is presented as one encounter. For clarity, the encounter is separated into eight different obstacles. If the PCs can overcome these obstacles, they can continue on to Clarkswell, and get on with their group, and private, missions. The tunnels are mostly 10' wide and 8' high, lit by torches, and relatively clean.

Obstacle 1— Locked door
The first obstacle is an obvious test of thieving ability. The corridor leads 80' south, then turns right for 50', ending in a door. The door is locked and trapped. The trap is a standard poison needle with

mild poison on it. If the trap is not detected, whoever messes with the lock will be stabbed for 1 point of damage, and must save vs. poison or take 20 points of damage. A successful save indicates five points of damage taken. The lock is standard, with no penalties to opening locks.

Obstacle 2— Fake undead

The second obstacle presents itself as soon as the door is opened. The door opens to reveal a 50' by 30' room, with three doors on the far wall. In between the PCs and the far wall are ten zombies, six ghouls, and three wights. The undead do not respond to turning attempts, but press forward to the attack. A low moaning voice is heard, "Go back, and live. Go forward, and die." The undead are just illusions, and are silent, even in their movements. A hidden mage is using a *wand of programmed illusions* to create a bunch of undead. There are three ways to get through this trap. The first is to attempt to turn them, realize that they are illusions, and successfully disbelieve. The second is to hack them all to pieces. The third is to back through the room. The illusions have been programmed to "attack anyone moving forward through the room." This means that they only attack from the front, so if someone turns his back on them, they do not attack. If someone is facing them, and moving away, they do not attack. If someone merely backs across the room, he can reach the three doors safely. Touching the walls on the far side of the room dispels the illusions. Touching the doors does also, but may also bring about one of the effects from the three doors trap.

Zombies (10): AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA nil; SD immune to sleep, charm, hold, cold-based spells; SW always attack last; MR nil; SZ M; ML n/a.

Ghouls (6): AL N; AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 1; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA save or be paralyzed for 1d10 turns; SD immune to sleep, charm, hold, and cold-based spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML n/a.

The paralysis is illusionary. As soon as the PCs realize that they are fighting illusions, the paralyzed person may save vs. spells at +4 each round until he succeed. When he does, he can move normally.

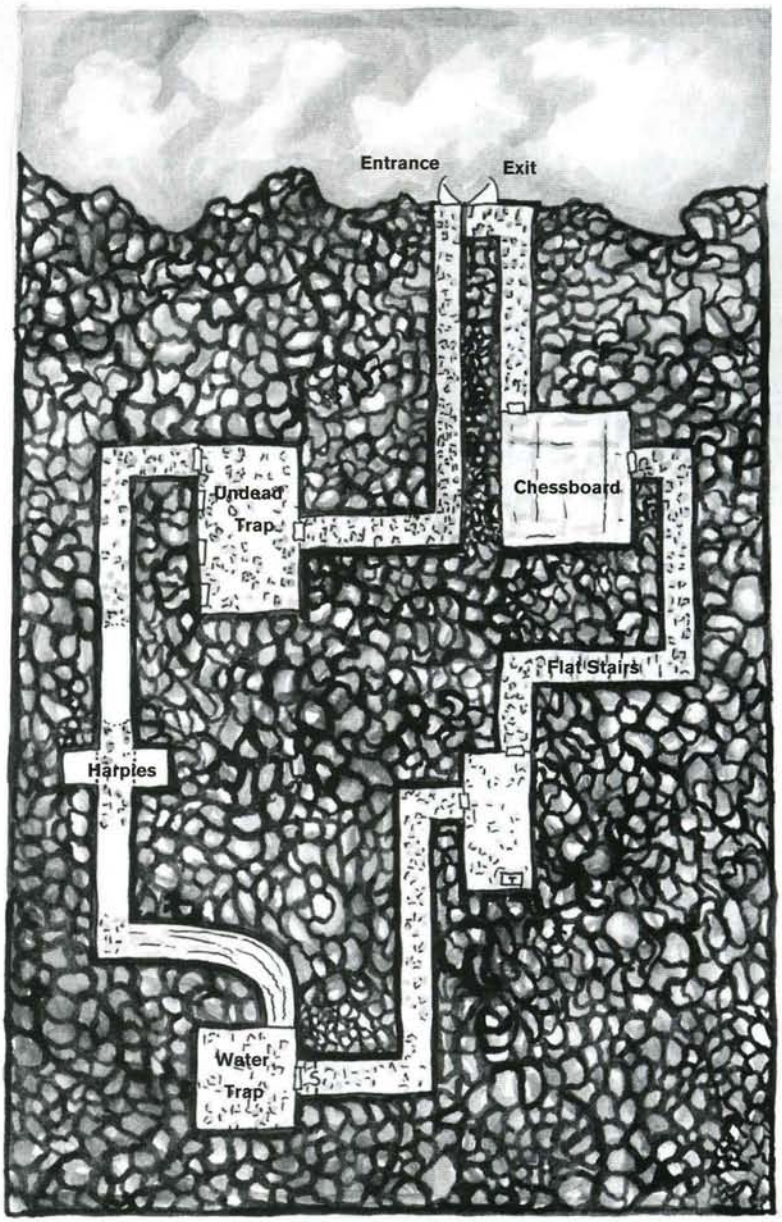
Wights (3): AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+3; hp 1; THAC0 15; #AT 1, Dmg 1d4; SA Energy Drain 1 level; SD immune to sleep, charm, hold, and cold-based spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML n/a.

The level draining is also illusionary in nature, successfully disbelieving it returns any lost levels.

Anyone killed by an illusion goes into a coma; they do not die. People in illusion-induced comas can be brought around by a magical healing spell. It should be fairly obvious that these are illusions, since any undead disappears, leaving no corporeal form behind, since even the wraiths take only one hit to disperse, and since the zombies, which should be automatically turned, do not respond to the turning by the cleric. If the player protests that he automatically turns zombies, just respond with, "Yes, I know." Do not give any hints; the PCs must figure it out for themselves.

Obstacle 3— Three door trap.

The PCs see three identical oaken doors. The doors are iron bound, and have no



handle or lock on this side. It is up to them to figure out how to get through these doors. The doors are all trapped, and fake. The first door (from the bottom of the map), is trapped with a *glyph of warding*. The glyph is a fire glyph, and does 4d6 points of fire damage to anyone in a 5' radius (saving throw for half damage) when the door is touched.

The second door is loose; if pushed, it gives a little. It is actually set on a spring, and anyone pushing it sets off the trap. The door slams down towards the pusher, doing 1d12 points of damage to anyone caught underneath it. A successful saving throw vs paralyzation allows affected persons to avoid all damage. If someone states that he or she is bashing down the door, or charging through it, or some such, they get no save, having fully committed themselves to going forward, not sideways or back. The door resets itself after slamming down.

The third door is covered with a sticky substance resembling sap. It is actually a contact poison. Anyone touching it must save vs. poison or lose 1 point of Strength for the next hour. This save must be made every round until the poison is washed off with wine or water.

If PCs actively search, they can find a secret door to the north of the three doors on a 1 in 6 chance (2 in 6 for elves and half-elves.) This door also appears if all three of the visible doors are touched. It is the only way through.

Obstacle 4—Harpy trap

The tunnel leads 30' to the west, turns south for 50', and then enters a zone of silence. Once past the zone of silence, the PCs can hear beautiful singing. All who hear it must save or be charmed (half-elven and elven resistance applicable). The harpies are located behind bars in an alcove on either side of the tunnel. They try and charm the PCs, and get them to come up and release them. There are no keys in sight, so the PCs must use magic, lock-picking skills, or brute force to get the locks open.

There are several ways for the group to get past. If one character drags someone else into the next zone of silence, the charm is broken immediately. Slapping a PC gives him or her another save at +2. A *silence15' radius* spell stops the sound, as does killing the harpies. Bards who save vs. charm have a chance of charming the harpies, causing them to fall silent and listen to the bard's singing.

Harpies (2): AL CE; AC 7; MV 6, fL 15; HD 7; hp 35, 34; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA charm by touch or singing; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML n/a.

The harpies can only attack if someone comes within three feet of the cage, anyone going down the middle of the corridor is safe from their attacks.

Obstacle 5—Greased slide and water room.

The tunnel past the zones of silence leads south for another 20 feet, turns east, and then curves south. Right where the passage is curved, it also begins to slope down. It is actually a slide, greased to make for poor footing. The characters in the lead must make a dexterity check (at -8), or slide down to a splashing landing in the crocodile room. No damage is taken, but the PC does end up sitting in 8" deep water. The south end of the room is deeper, and there lie two large crocodiles. The crocs are hungry, and immediately move to the attack.

Crocodiles (2): AL N; AC 5; MV 6, sw 12; HD 3; hp 24, 19; THAC0 16; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d12; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L; ML n/a.

The crocodiles automatically win initiative on the first round, due to the fact that the PCs are sitting on their behinds in the water. The crocodiles attack until killed.

When the crocs are dispatched, the PCs can search the room. A narrow secret door can be found. This door is poorly hidden, and can be found on a 2 in 6 chance by anyone looking (4 in 6 for elves and half-elves.) Clever PCs may also notice that the water keeps entering the room from a pipe in the south, but never gets any deeper. The water is at the level of the bottom of the secret door, and flows out under it. Anything that floats will gradually move towards the secret door. The door is only 3' by 3', so the PCs must crawl through. There is a drain on the other side, and after 10', the tunnel resumes its normal height.

Obstacle 6—Trunk room

The tunnel continues east for 30' after it resumes normal size, and then turns north. It runs north for 80', and then turns east for 10', ending with a door. The door is locked, and has a very complex lock. The chance for picking it is reduced by 50%. The door can also be broken in if it takes 50 points of damage to AC 5.

Once they are through the door, the PCs find themselves in a large room, 20' by 40', with a trunk in the southeast corner, and an ornate door in the northeast corner. The trunk is locked and trapped. The trap is a gas trap, all in a 10' area must save vs. poison or be weakened (lose 1/2 of strength) for one hour. The lock is normal, with no penalty to lock-picking chances. Inside the trunk is a bag with a note attached. The note reads "traveling expenses." The bag contains 50 copper and 50 silver pieces.

The northeast door is iron, and covered with ornate writings. It is intended to challenge the read languages ability of the thieves, or the comprehend languages spells of the mages. In six different languages, the writing reads, "to open, speak winter." The languages are; Ki-rin, Drow, Ancient Dwarven, Hill Giant, Silver Dragon, and Pixie. There is a 35% chance that anyone who can read Dwarven can puzzle out a word from the Ancient Dwarven, only one per successful check, and that anyone who can read elf can puzzle out a word from the drow language. Unless someone asks about this, do not mention it.

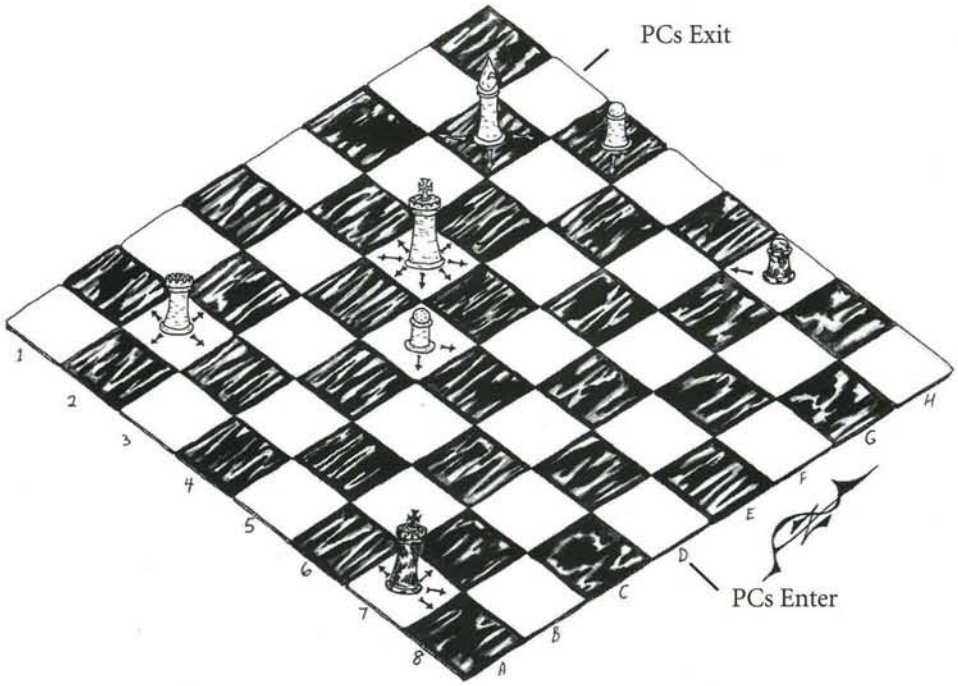
Obstacle 7—Flat stairs.

Once the PCs have exited the room, the tunnel continues north for 30 feet, and turns east. After ten feet, a stairway climbs another 30 feet to a landing. On the wall as the corner is turned is a sign that says "I never thought you'd make it this far. B." This is to encourage the characters, who may be thinking that the run will never end.

The stairs are trapped. Whenever more than 120 pounds is placed on them, they flop down to make a flat ramp. Also, there are many bags of oil under the stairs, when the stairs go flat, oil is squeezed out onto the ramp, making it very slippery. Anyone on the stairs slides

down to the bottom, taking 1-3 points of damage in the process. Someone must climb or fly, to the top of the stairs, lowering a rope for the rest of the PCs to come up.

There is a small sill by the stairs, but it too is covered with oil. Merely setting fire to the oil and waiting until it burns up is quite acceptable. The smoke and heat go up, and there is enough air flow that the PCs can rest comfortably, as long as they draw back from the fire. It takes 20 minutes before all of the oil burns up. The climb can then be made with a climb walls check. Anyone failing a check tumbles down the ramp, taking 1-6 points of damage in the process. After one failed attempt the PC can spot the ashy spot where he slipped, and may make it to the top with no further checks required.



Obstacle 8—Chessboard of death.
After passing the stairs, the tunnel continues north for 70', and then turns west for 10'. It ends in an archway, with the words "Chessboard of Death" above it. Consult the map for the exact layout. Inside, the room is filled with a 40' by 40' chessboard. Each square is 5' on a side, and seven of the squares are occupied. There is a black king, and a black pawn. There are five white pieces, a king, a rook, a bishop, and two pawns. In chess terms, numbering the board from "A" to "H" across the top, and from 1 to 8 down the side, the white rook is at B2, the white bishop is at G2, the white king is at E3, there is a white pawn at H3, and at D4. The black king is at A7, the black pawn at H6, and the exit square is H2. The PCs entered onto square D8, which is safe.

Any time that a PC steps on a square "commanded" by a chess piece, the piece lets go with magic missiles. All of the magic missiles do minimum damage. The pawns loose one missile, the bishop three, the rook and king five. The areas of effect are indicated by arrows on the map, but basically, the kings can attack any area around them, the rook any area in straight lines away from it, the bishop any area in diagonal lines away from it, and the pawns may only attack diagonally to the two squares(one in the case of the two pawns in the H file). The pieces are armor class 0, and can take as many points of damage as they fire missiles. (Pawns-1, bishop-3, rook-5, king-5). Once destroyed, the pieces are no longer an active threat, and anyone may climb over them with impunity. Otherwise, anyone entering a square with a piece in it suffers attacks as though they were in a square commanded by a piece.

There is no absolutely safe path to the exit, although destroying the pawn in H3 and then going around it would get them through with no damage. Otherwise, the wisest path is past the pawn in H3, taking 2 points of damage apiece, in the process.

If two people enter the same attacked square, each is hit with the appropriate number of missiles. This does not apply to unconscious characters. Anyone brought below zero hit points could be carried out by someone else, and not suffer the attacks of the chessmen.

Once out of the chessboard room, the corridor continues north for sixty feet, and then ends. There is a ladder, which climbs to another trap door, behind the barn. The PCs are almost exactly where they started, but they have completed the run.

When the PCs emerge, Allfraidus is waiting for them. He whispers that their horses are ready, and that it's a two day ride to Clarkswell. The PCs should be back in no more than a tenday; this test is timed as well. The horses are packed with enough food, water, and feed for two days. It is up to the PCs after that. They are not allowed to stop in Arabel to pick up supplies or information. This is a test of their skill, not their ability to buy stuff.

CLARKSWELL

The village of Clarkswell is presented in order of probable appearance. It is a small farming village, with little trade. The elders of the band deliberately selected a small town, knowing that the PCs would have to work hard to find treasures valuable enough to pass the test.

Since the PCs have to learn about the town before planning a job, the following points of information are listed. Each NPC detailed has a note explaining exactly what information can be gotten from him.

A. This is a small poor town, made up of mostly farmers.
B. There are only three real officials in town, the mayor, the protector mage,

and the captain of the guard.

C. The mayor is Gladgo Haltok, a real nice guy. He used to be a powerful adventurer, and a strong fighter. He still wears an emerald necklace from his adventuring days.
D. The guard captain is Lyle Grobit, a very powerful fighter. He is strong enough to lift a horse by himself. He's a bit moody, though.
E. The wizard's name is Eloras. He doesn't talk to people much, but he's always ready to help defend the town, and he has the spells to do it, too.
F. The mayor is leaving town tomorrow night, going to some big festivity in Arabel.

Allfraidus blends into the town perfectly, if the PCs ignore him, he will be behind them all the way. He also draws no attention to himself in town. He can masquerade as either a farmer or a merchant, with equal success. He is a consummate actor, and draws no suspicion to himself no matter what he or the PCs do.

Cooked Goose Inn

Markel Harkwhite, proprietor: AL NG; AC 5; MV 12; HD 3(F3); hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1(*dagger +1*); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Dex 16; SZ M; ML 12.

He wears a *ring of protection +3*. The ring is plain although the dagger at his side is jewelled, and worth 750 gp. Markel is a retired fighter, a grizzled bear of a man in his late 50s. He settled down here where it was quiet. He is not interested in talking to someone who is not a paying customer. Bards can get food and lodging(for one night only) by playing to the supper crowd. Otherwise rooms are 2 sp per night, and meals are 5 coppers each, with ale at 2 coppers. If the PCs ask for special food and drinks, at your discretion he may have it at a higher cost. Markel is not very talkative. He knows points A, B, C, D, E, and F. Getting him to reveal them might cause suspicion.

Markel's wife does the cooking, and their two daughters are the waitresses at the inn. Markel's wife will not make an appearance, but the PCs probably encounter the daughters. They are both 0 level humans, with 5 hit points. They carry knives in their belts, and are polite waitresses.

Sinali is the oldest, and will obviously never catch a husband without her parents intervention. She is very plain, and has a loud pushy personality. She delights in asking strangers embarrassing questions. She knows points A,B,C.

Talli is the younger daughter, and is also very plain. She has a winning personality, and is friendly and soft-spoken. She pays particular attention to Jacques, Ivan, and Ian, and she knows points A,B,C, and E.

The clientele of the inn varies quite a bit. There are usually two or three farmers sitting around, and possibly a travelling salesman or wandering adventurer. The list given is far from complete, if you need more NPCs, just wing it. All natives of the town know points A,B, and C, and most know the D, and F, as well. Less than half know the wizard's name, although all of them know that there is a wizard who lives in town.

The current clientele include: Brazee is a worrier. He is worried about the weather, the crops, the marauding crop killing beasts(which exist only in his mind), how bad the soil on his farm is, whatever you can think of to worry and complain about. He knows points A, B, and C.

Brazee is sitting with Josiah Crimple (farmer), a man as cheerful as Brazee is depressed. He knows points A through F. People just naturally talk to him, and tell him things. He is happy to share this information with the PCs, and if they are not blatant about asking for it, he doesn't even get suspicious.

The last farmer at their table is Paul Portis (hired hand), a rather dull boy of 19, Paul is just here because Josiah is paying for the ale. He knows points A,B, and C. Paul likes to sit and listen a lot, which complements Josiah's urge to talk.

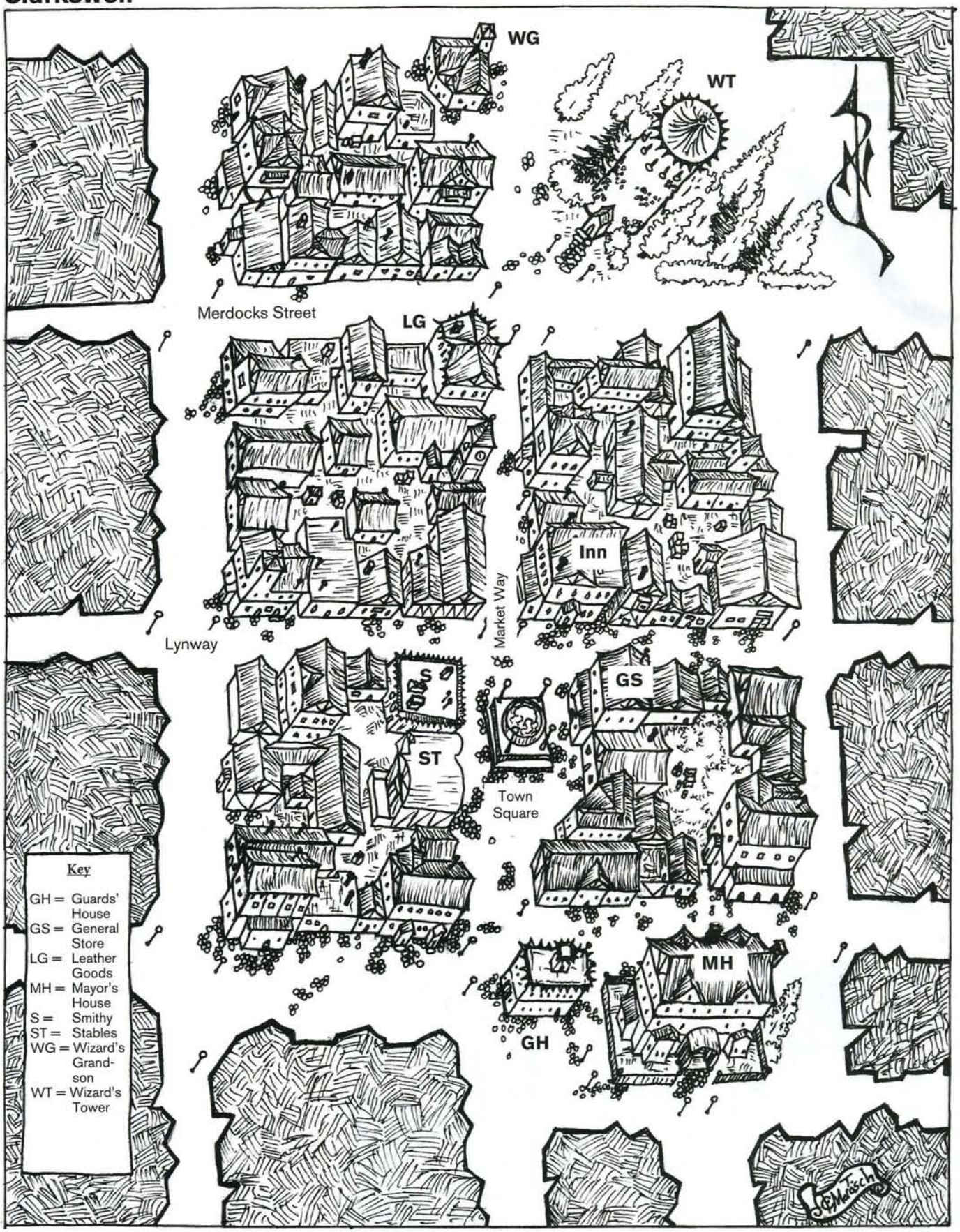
The farmers are usually here at suppertime, as none of them has a wife. They stay for a few hours after supper, but Brazee usually leaves a couple hours before midnight, and Josiah and Paul are always gone by midnight.

There are two "regulars." These guys have jobs and wives, and their wives are the reasons that they show up every afternoon right after work, and stay until the common room at the inn closes, a couple hours after midnight.

Norf (bar regular) is a portly, friendly man, with a perpetual smile that only goes away when his mug is empty. Norf is happy to visit with anyone, and knows points A, B, C, and D.

Climm(bar regular) is an expert on everything. He knows points A through F, and will eventually get around to telling the PCs these points, if they listen to him long enough. His favorite way to start a sentence is; "Did you know that scientific tests have proven that...," and go on from there. Sample topics include: male lizards grow to be 25% larger than the female, people who eat only oats and wheat live 1.3 years longer than those who eat great amounts of red meat, women are constitutionally able to talk longer than men, and anything else that a misinformed expert can think up.

Clarkswell


WG
WT
Merdocks Street
LG
Inn
Market Way
Lynway
S
ST
GS
Town
Square
MH
GH
Key
GH = Guards' House
GS = General Store
LG = Leather Goods
MH = Mayor's House
S = Smithy
ST = Stables
WG = Wizard's Grandson
WT = Wizard's Tower

Presented here are a travelling merchant and adventurer, each sitting separately.

Xanthes Smithson (merchant), is a dealer in arms and armor. His stuff is only average quality, but he is glad to take anyone up to his room and show them some samples. Xanthes can smell a profit a mile away, and is a rather greasy individual. He knows only points A and B.

Gutrock Trollbane (hm F5), wears plate mail, has a shield on the floor near him, and is wearing a *ring of regeneration*. He is a competent, if dull fighter, and a duller companion. He knows only point A. Gutrock is here on his way north. He will sound out the PCs about possibly joining a group he is putting together. He leaves town after the first night.

Also to be found at the inn at night are Lyle Grobit (the guard captain), Mercer (the blacksmith), Norcal (who runs the stables), and on the second night, the mayor (Gladgo) himself drops by for a drink. He is on his way out of town, and just stopped by to say goodbye to his friend Markel, and discuss a few things with Lyle.

Lyle Grobit (guard captain): AL LN; AC 4 (*bracers of defense AC 4*); MV 12; HD F7; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-8+5 (*long sword +1*); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 18/84, Con 15, Dex 15; SZ M; ML 15. He is a straitlaced individual, quick to take offense at any insult. He has no trouble insulting others, but they better not do it to him! He knows points A through F. Also, his guard company is up to 40 regular fighters, with another 60 civilians with some training on call. He is very proud of his guard force, and brooks no insults about them. In duels, he insists on honorable combat(1/4 of all damage is real), and insists on going outside.

Gladgo Haltok (mayor): AL NG; AC 0 (*bracers of defense AC 2, ring of protection +2*); MV 12; HD F6; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1(*short sword +1*); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 15, Cha 17; SZ M; ML 14. Gladgo wears an emerald pendant worth an easy 7,500 gp. It is enchanted with a magic mouth, which screams "thieves, murderers!" six times if it is taken off of his neck by anyone but himself. Gladgo knows all of the points covered, as well as the fact that Eloras is a grouchy old man who nonetheless loves the town. He has saved it from monsters three different times. He is the most powerful wizard that Gladgo has ever seen. He would be impressed by nobles, and would give such a PC a gift (a small 50 gp amethyst) as a token of good will from the town. He is hard to convince, however, that someone is actually of noble lineage.

Blacksmith Shop

Mercer Strongson, proprietor: AL NG; AC 10; MV 9; HD F1; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (hammer); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 17, Cha 11; SZ M; ML 11. Mercer is a big blustering man with little knowledge except metal working. He knows points A,B, and C. He is not interested in talking while he is working. At the bar, he continually tries to shoot down Climm's stories, but he is even less well informed than Climm.

Stables

Norcal, proprietor: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; HD 1; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3 (knife); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 10. Norcal is a sickly man who smokes too much. He always has a pipe dangling from his mouth, and coughs every two minutes. He knows points A through D, and will share his information for a price. He can be bribed very cheaply,(1 gp is more than he expects). He is also not to be trusted. If the PCs ask obvious questions, their interest is passed on to Lyle, who may start watching them suspiciously.

Norcal charges 1 silver piece per horse per week, and the horses receive adequate care.

General Store

Mitzi Elder, proprietor: AL LG; AC 7 (*ring of protection +3*); MV 12; HD F3; hp 19; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1(*dagger +1*); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 11. Mitzi runs, and I do mean RUNS, the general store. She is always on the lookout for thieves, and can spot a shoplifter a mile away. Her shop has any item that can normally be found in a general store, for prices at 20% over the prices listed in the *Player's Handbook*. She knows points A through F, and if the party is pleasant, she is happy to share them. Mitzi has 34 copper, 22 silver, 13 electrum, and 5 gold pieces in the cashbox, which has a magic mouth spell cast on it. The *magic mouth* yells "Guards, robbery!" six times if anyone but Mitzi opens the cashbox.

Leather Goods For All

Jason Hetrick, proprietor: AL NG; AC 8; MV 12; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 10. Jason is a friendly sort, very interested in who these strangers are, are they going to stay, where did they come from, how are things in Arabel, just a flow of questions. He knows points A, B, C, D, and F, but it may be hard to get him to talk about the town, when there is so much the PCs can tell him.

His shop offers leather goods, saddles, and even leather armor with prices as listed in the *Player's Handbook*.

Guard House

This barracks houses 40 guards, although 20 are always out patrolling around the town. Standard guard statistics are listed here. There are 10 sleeping guards usually, and three stationed at the barracks. The remaining are off duty and elsewhere in town.

Guards: AL N; AC 4; MV 9; HD F3; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (short sword) or 1d4 (light crossbow); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12. The guards wear splint mail, and carry short swords and light crossbows. They work well together, and if trouble starts four of the patrol attack, while the remaining one runs for help.

There is nothing of interest to the PCs in the guardhouse, except 40 footlockers with an average of 2 silver pieces and the guards' personal possessions in them.

Mayor's House

The mayor's house is a large mansion. The layout is not provided; if the PCs decide to enter, you are on your own. The mayor sleeps on the second floor, in a ornate bedroom near the back. He has a wizard lock on his bedroom door, and a *glyph of warding* on the hidden safe behind a bookshelf in his room. At night, his emerald pendant and bracers are locked in the safe. The safe has a combination lock, which has a -20% penalty to lock picking chances. There are no per-

manent guards, although the patrols do go by the mayor's house every fifteen minutes.

WIZARD'S TOWER:

Eloras, Protector Mage, hm W11: AL NG; AC 2 (*bracers of defense AC 5*); MV 12; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (*dagger +2*); SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; Int 17, Dex 17, Cha 11; SZ M; ML 14.

Magical items: *ring of fire resistance, wand of paralyzation* (12 charges).

Spells: *magic missile, comprehend languages, detect magic, unseen servant, detect evil, detect invisibility, invisibility, web, lightning bolt, slow, hold person x2, ice storm, polymorph self, polymorph other, hold monster, cone of cold, teleport.*

Eloras is almost 80, but has drunk several potions of longevity during his adventuring days, so he is as spry as a man 30 years younger. He is close-mouthed, but loyal to the town where he was born. His *ring of fire resistance* has a diamond mounted in it, worth 5,000 gp. Eloras knows points A through F, but is reluctant to talk to someone who is not interested in his town.

If the party approaches Eloras with a good cover story, for instance, that they are thinking of settling down here, and want to know about the defense of the town, or that the mages are looking for training, and are willing to help defend the town while training, he will usher them into his tower.

The tower consists of only two rooms. There is his workroom, on the ground floor, and his bedroom, on the upper floor. He eats all of his meals at the home of his grandson, two blocks away.

Ground Floor:

This is a typical wizard's workroom. It is stinky, sloppy, and crammed from wall to wall with magical apparatus and items. When they are ushered in, Eloras warns them not to touch anything, it might turn them into something disgusting. The outside door is *wizard locked*, and trapped with a fire trap (4d6 points of damage in a 5' radius, save for half.). The fire trap has a password, which Eloras uses to let anyone he wants to in. There are three obvious magic items: a bowl which radiates strong magic (*bowl of water elemental summoning*), a rack of 3 potions marked "healing", "climbing", and "flying" (actually they are a *potion of fire giant control*, poison, and a *potion of extra-healing* respectively), and a wand case on the floor under the table, (it has a scroll with 3 *knock* spells in it).

Upper Floor:

This is a very neat bedroom, Eloras leaves the mess downstairs. There is a hooded lantern with a *continual light* spell cast upon it, a wardrobe with a dozen wizard's cloaks, an ornate four poster bed, and a nightstand. Inside the drawer of the nightstand is a scroll with 3 *magic missiles*, 2 *webs*, and a *dimension door* enscribed upon it.(just in case he is attacked in bed).

If the PCs don't go talk to the wizard, sometime on the second day in town one of them spots an old man with a huge diamond on his ring, heading to his grandson's to eat.

If the PCs do not want to steal from anyone, they can hear about a group of marauding giants who hit a farmstead 10 miles north of Clarkswell last night. Eloras, Lyle, Gladgo, Markel, and Climm all know about this raid. If the PCs follow up on this lead, they find tracks which are easily followed that lead to the giant's lair. Do not give them this option unless they ask for it. If they do, and they leave town, continue with the hill giant encounter.

When adjudicating the robbery, consider the PCs' plans and preparations more than dice rolls. If they have a good idea, then it should not fail simply because of bad dice. Some misfortune or anxiety is okay, though. If the plan is lousy, an alarm may be raised, bringing at least one patrol in 2-4 rounds, another in 3-6 rounds, and Lyle and the remaining 10 guards in one turn.

If the party decides to wait and waylay the mayor, they find he is traveling with 5 guards. The guards are alert, and will not surrender. Only if the mayor's life is in danger will he surrender his prized emerald pendant. Use the guard stats from the guardhouse. This is the best and easiest option, and if the PCs decide on it, they have no trouble finding a good spot for an ambush.

Once they return to Arabel, they are admitted to the guild, as long as they have enough treasure to pass the test. The individual tests are not a factor in membership, merely in the rank they will be accorded after joining.

Raiding Hill Giants

Having decided that it would be easier to kill some evil giants than rob a powerful wizard, you have tracked the giants from the site of their last raid to a large cave in the hills. You were able to find a vantage point from which you could watch unobserved. There is one hill giant on watch, sitting outside of the cave. He seems to be having trouble staying awake.

The hill giant will fall asleep if the PCs watch for 1/2 hour. Once he is asleep, they can either try and sneak in, or dispatch him while he is sleeping, and take the cave by surprise. If the sleeping giant is killed, he gurgles just before he dies, and someone in the cave shouts something in hill giant.

Hill Giants (4): AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 12; hp 80, 71, 75, 65; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12+7; SA hurl rocks for 2-16; SD nil; MR nil; SZ H(16' tall); ML 14.

The hill giants have a good bit of treasure, including 300 platinum, 3000 gold, and 1600 electrum. There are some bits and pieces of other treasure as well, but what's listed is enough to satisfy the band.

If the party sneaks in they can get a free round of actions due to the giants' surprise. If they kill the sleeping giant, they have no chance of surprising the rest of the giants, but the giants cannot surprise them, either. The giants are not used to strong opposition. Any giant brought below 20 hit points tries to flee and save himself.

Betraying the Band

If you wish to play out the characters' betrayal of the band, then use this encounter. You need not do so now; perhaps the characters are long-term plants. However, they will be subject to a geas spell never to betray the band, so likely they will want to act immediately.

After completing your tests, you were all admitted to Brandon's Band of Thieves. You were taken to the secret guildhall, it turns out it is on a level below the dungeons at the main constabulary of Arabel. You also got to meet Brandon himself, although behind that mask he could have been anybody. You are told that tomorrow you will be geased never to betray the guild, and then you will finally be official guild members. A large party is thrown in your honor. You are then each shown your rooms, and told to be ready for tomorrow, for tomorrow you become members of the best thieves guild in the Realms, forever.

The characters should sneak around and find the evidence they need, and then try to escape the compound undetected. This will be virtually impossible, but good luck and careful planning should get them far. You will have to provide a map of the thieves' guildhall, complete with alarms and traps at all of the sensitive places.

Once the PCs trip an alarm or trap that causes noise, a hue and cry will be raised against them. Proceed with the following when that happens.

Running towards the door, you realize it's too late when it bursts open and three members of the guild charge in. Behind them is Brandon himself, who yells, "Every one of them must die, or we're all in prison!" There are others in the hallway behind him.

Fortunately most of the guild members are passed out drunk from the party, but the most able lieutenants are sober. They realize this is all or nothing, and will only flee if in immediate danger of death,(10 points remaining, or less), and there is a clear path to safety.

The first three are fighters.
Guild Fighters (3), hm F8: AL N or NE; AC -2 (*chain mail +2*); MV 9; hp 84, 60, 65; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6+5(*short swords +2*); SA specialized in short sword; SD nil; MR nil; Str 17, Dex 18; SZ M; ML n/a.

Brandon is the next one in.
Brandon(actually Kles Longrin, city council member), hm T11: AL NE; AC 0 (*bracers of defense AC 4*); MV 12; hp 40; THAC0 12; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6+4 (*short sword +3*) and 1-4+3 (*dagger +2*); SA back stab for 4x damage; SD nil; MR nil; Str 17, Dex 18; SZ M; ML n/a.

He has a *ring of vampiric regeneration*, and a *ring of free action* on, as well as *boots of levitation*, and *potions of fiery breath* and *invisibility*. He only uses the potion of fire-breath to save his own life, since it will toast his office.

Following is another fighter.
Guild Fighter, hm F7: AL NE; AC 0 (*plate mail +2*, shield); MV 9; hp 62; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8+10 (*long sword +2*); SA specialized in long sword; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML n/a.

He wears *gauntlets of ogre power*, and is wearing a *ring of fire resistance.*

In the rear is the only mage Brandon was able to summon:
Guild Mage, hm W10: AL N; AC 4 (*ring of protection +2*); MV 12; hp 25; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (dagger); SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; Dex 18, Int 17; SZ M; ML n/a.

He carries a *wand of polymorphing* (18 charges), and has a scroll with two *power word stun* spells scribed on it.

Spells: *magic missile, comprehend languages, read magic, shocking grasp, Melf's acid arrow, invisibility, detect invisibility, whispering wind, hold person, vampiric touch, lightning bolt, wall of ice, dimension door, cone of cold, feeblemind.*

Round one: Since the party was rushing towards the door, they are not surprised. Roll initiative, and proceed normally. The three fighters all burst into the room. They close with the first three people they meet. Brandon swigs his *potion of invisibility*, and tries to slip along the wall and get behind somebody. The mage also makes himself invisible.

Round two: The last fighter enters, and closes. Brandon continues to slide along the wall, unless he is attacked. The mage gets into position in the doorway, and casts *detect invisibility*, just in case.

Round three: Fighters melee, Brandon tries to back stab someone, and the mage lets go with a *feeblemind* spell directed at mage preferentially.

Round four and beyond: Run the battle as quickly as you can, remembering that the NPC will all fight as intelligently and as ruthlessly as they can.

If the PCs run, they can escape with the information they have collected. If they are in real trouble, you can have the mage launch a *lightning bolt* that rips the ceiling out. Since this is the dungeon of the main police station, within two rounds enough city guardsmen drop through to turn the battle.

EPILOGUE:

If the characters collected enough information, they can bust the gang permanently. If not, then they'd better flee the territory. Further adventures could include reprisals by the gang, which must silence the PCs or risk exposure.

If the characters are in the band, then further adventures could include their exploits as thieves.

Here ends *Audition*.

What do you know?

by Chris Ruester

In the beginning, you've got stats, a race, and a class. You may even have a name. Somewhere in the character creation process, you probably figured out the character's special abilities, hit points, saving throws, combat info, movement rate, and, just maybe, encumbrance. But what else?

You're going to want Non-Weapon Proficiencies (NWPs). Since the advent of 2nd edition AD&D, NWPs have become an important element of a character and help fill out what the character knows. Though not all DMs use this system, it has become a large part of the character creation process in most games. NWPs add a depth not found within the basic class/race structure of AD&D.

One of these uses is in the character's origins. Even if the player has not written a background for his or her character, the NWPs chosen can build one on its own. Even the most obscure combinations can weave such a web.

Example: Bordnar was born and raised on a farm. He was taught by his father to take over the family farm. (Agriculture, Animal Handling, Herbalism, Weather Sense) Then one night, Bordnar was kidnapped, his farm burned, and his parents killed. Sold into slavery, Bordnar saw many masters, and learned to endure the hardships of his new life. (Endurance) Finally, Bordnar was taken aboard a pirate ship and became the cabin boy. While life was still hard, the captain respected the young lad and taught him many things of life on the sea (Boating, Cartography, Cooking, Direction Sense, Fishing, Navigation, Rope Use, Seamanship, Swimming).

Even alone a story could be combed out of such a diverse group of proficiencies. While the above is a good example, it is not necessary that every character's proficiencies fit a story, nor is it impossible that a character learned a proficiency not associated with his or her background. It is not uncommon for adventurers and travellers to enter into the life of a character, teaching and inspiring the character to become an adventurer.

The second most common method used in choosing a character's proficiencies involves his or her current profession. This is an extension of the character's background, since adventurers don't automatically start knowing all the skills they have at first level.

Using a character's race, this can eliminate the likelihood of certain proficiencies, while possibly guaranteeing the use of others. While elves probably would have proficiencies involving woodlands and nature, dwarves would have NWPs dealing with the underground and stone. In some cases, though, it might fit the character to have abnormal proficiencies.

The character's class also lends well to tailoring with proficiencies. The Groups which proficiencies are separated into follow this line of thinking well. But this should not be considered a straightjacket on the player. Allowing for individuality can enhance the character and provide for tremendous roleplay opportunities.

Not only can proficiencies give a character depth, they can add unusual twists and turns to a campaign. Using the skills possessed by the player characters, a DM can create whole adventures centered around non-weapon proficiencies!

Non-weapon proficiencies add depth to any character, and are a great way of placing flavor and diversity into the adventuring party.

❑

Proficiency	Slots	Ability	Mod.	Group	Book
Acting	1	Cha	-1	B	7
Agriculture	1	Int	0	All	PHB
Alchemy	2	Int	-3	M	PO:S&M
Alertness	1	Wis	+1	All	11
Anatomy	1	Wis	0	M,P	NEC
Animal Handling	1	Wis	-1	All	PHB
Animal Lore	1	Int	0	F	PHB
Animal Noise	1	Wis	-1	F,T	2
Animal Training	1	Wis	0	All	PHB
Appraising	1	Int	0	T	PHB
Armorer	2	Int	-2	F	PHB
Artistic Ability	1	Wis	0	All	PHB
Astrology	2	Int	0	M,P	PHB
Begging	1	Cha	Var	T	2
Blacksmithing	1	Str	0	All	PHB
Blind-fighting	2	NA	NA	F,T	PHB
Boating	1	Wis	+1	All	2
Boatwright	1	Int	-2	F	6
Bowyer/Fletcher	1	Dex	-1	F	PHB
Brewing	1	Int	0	All	PHB
Bureaucracy	2	Int	0	P,T	12
Camouflage	1	Wis	0	F,T	11
Carpentry	1	Str	0	All	PHB
Cartography	1	Int	-2	All	11
Chanting	1	Cha	+2	B	7
Charioteering	1	Dex	+2	F	PHB
Cheesemaking	1	Int	0	All	10
Cobbling	1	Dex	0	All	PHB
Cooking	1	Int	0	All	PHB
Craft Instrument	2	Dex	-2	B	7
Crowd Working	1	Cha	0	B	7
Dancing	1	Dex	0	All	PHB
Danger Sense	2	Wis	+1	All	10
Diagnostics	1	Wis	-1	P	12
Direction Sense	1	Wis	+1	All	PHB
Disguise	1	Cha	-1	T	PHB
Distance Sense	1	Wis	0	All	11
Drinking	1	Con	0	All	10
Dwarf Runes	1	Int	?	M,P	6
Eating	1	Con	0	All	10
Endurance	2	Con	0	F	PHB
Engineering	2	Int	-3	M,P	PHB
Etiquette	1	Cha	0	All	PHB

Proficiency	Slots	Ability	Mod.	Group	Book
Falconry	1	Wis	-1	All	11
Fast Talking	1	Cha	Var	T	2
Fighting, Close	2	Dex	0	F,T	10
Fighting, Natural	2	Str	+1	F	10
Fighting, Wild	2	Con	0	F	10
Fire-Building	1	Wis	-1	All	PHB
Fishing	1	Wis	-1	All	PHB
Foraging	1	Int	-2	F,T	11
Forgery	1	Dex	-1	T	PHB
Fortune Telling	2	Cha	+2	T	2
Fungi Recognition	1	Int	+3	All	6
Gaming	1	Cha	0	F,T	PHB
Gem Cutting	2	Dex	-2	M,T	PHB
Healing	2	Wis	-2	P	PHB
Heraldry	1	Int	0	All	PHB
Herbalism	2	Int	-2	M,P	PHB
History, Ancient	1	Int	-1	M,P	PHB
History, Local	1	Cha	0	P,T	PHB
History, Local Dwarf	1	Cha	+2	Dwarf	6
Hunting	1	Wis	-1	F	PHB
Information Gathering	1	Int	Var	T	2
Intimidation	1	Str/Ch	0	T	2
Jousting	1	Dex	+2	F	12
Juggling	1	Dex	-1	T	PHB
Jumping	1	Str	0	T	PHB
Language, Ancient	1	Int	0	M,P	PHB
Language, Modern	1	Int	0	All	PHB
Law	1	Wis	0	F,P	12
Leatherworking	1	Int	0	All	PHB
Locksmithing	1	Dex	0	T	2
Looting	1	Dex	0	T	2
Mining	2	Wis	-3	All	PHB
Mountaineering	1	NA	NA	F	PHB
Musical Instrument	1	Dex	-1	P,T	PHB
Navigation	1	Int	-2	F,M,P	PHB
Navigation, Undergrnd	1	Int	0	F	6
Netherworld Knowl.	1	Wis	-3	M,P	NEC
Observation	1	Int	0	T	2
Oratory	1	Cha	0	F,P	12
Persuasion	1	Cha	0	All	11
Pest Control	1	Wis	0	M,P	6
Poetry	1	Int	-2	B/All	7/12
Pottery	1	Dex	-2	All	PHB
Reading Lips	2	Int	-2	T	PHB
Reading/Writing	1	Int	+1	M,P	PHB
Religion	1	Wis	0	M,P	PHB
Riding, Airborne	2	Wis	-2	All	PHB
Riding, Land-based	1	Wis	+3	All	PHB
Riding, Sea-based	2	Dex	-2	All	11
Rope Use	1	Dex	0	All	PHB
Running	1	Con	-6	F	PHB
Seamanship	1	Dex	+1	All	PHB
Seamstress/Tailor	1	Dex	-1	All	PHB
Set Snares	1	Int	-1	F,T	PHB
Sign Language	1	Dex	+2	T,P	6
Signaling	1	Int	+2	All	11
Singing	1	Cha	0	All	PHB
Slow Respiration	1	NA	NA	Dwarf	6
Smelting	1	Int	0	Dwarf	6
Sound Analysis	1	Wis	0	All	6
Spellcraft	1	Int	-2	M,P	PHB
Spelunking	1	Int	-2	F	11
Spirit Lore	2	Cha	-4	M,P	NEC
Stonemasonry	1	Str	-2	All	PHB
Survival	2	Int	0	F	PHB
Survival, Underground	1	Int	0	F	6
Swimming	1	Str	0	All	PHB
Tightrope Walking	1	Dex	0	T	PHB
Tracking	2(0)	Wis	-6(0)	F(R)	PHB
Trailing	1	Dex	Var	T	2
Trail Marking	1	Wis	0	F	11
Trail Signs	1	Int	-1	F,T	11
Tumbling	1	Dex	0	T	PHB
Venom Handling	1	Wis	-2	T	NEC
Ventriloquism	1	Int	-2	T	PHB
Veterinary Healing	1	Wis	-3	P,R	11
Voice Mimicry	2	Cha	Var	T	2
Weaponsmithing	2	Int	-3	F	PHB
Weaponsmith, Crude	1	Wis	-3	F	11
Weather Sense	1	Wis	-1	All	PHB
Weaving	1	Int	-1	All	PHB
Whistling/Humming	1	Dex	+2	B	7
Winemaking	1	Int	0	All	10

Group List

F	Warriors
R	Rangers Only
M	Wizards
P	Priests
T	Rogues
B	Bards Only

Source List (in order of appearance)

PHB	Player's Handbook
2	Complete Thief's Handbook
6	Complete Book of Dwarves
7	Complete Bard's Handbook
10	Complete Book of Humanoids
11	Complete Ranger's Handbook
12	Complete Paladin's Handbook
PO:S&M	PLAYER'S OPTION®: Spells & Magic

The Game of Masks

by Ed Greenwood

Excerpted from the City of Ravens Bluff sourcebook for the FORGOTTEN REALMS® *campaign setting, available this month.*

Originally established as a way to keep restless adventurers from doing real damage in the city (or leaving town for good, when winter orc raids or some other threat might soon make them a necessity), the Game of Masks has always been played by bored thrill-seekers among the nobles and the wealthier merchants (most recently by members of the Builders and Stonemasons Guilds).

Simply put, the Game of Masks is an ongoing puzzle, or "treasure hunt," or series of conspiracy plots, with treasure rewards for successful solvers—"a kind of parlor game that got out of hand" as one critic put it. Originally devised and hosted by the late sensualite Lady Tassandra Raphael, the Game is now administered jointly by young priests and priestesses from the city temples of Tempus and Tymora. Cryptic verses, found at revels put on by various nobles who enjoy the Game as unfolding entertainment, lead participants through challenges (including battling monsters legally brought in for the purpose) to solve mysteries and puzzles of the "who murdered the knight" or "who stole the jewels" type. Mock murders and disguised malefactors feature heavily in these games; to avoid problem with die Watch, its officers are informed of the plot beforehand, lest their constables mistake these fake crimes for the real thing. Participants collect "Masks" (large, ornate, gilded playing cards) hidden at the "crime scene" to prove that the finder has solved a clue or part of a mystery.

Anyone can participate in the Game of Masks, upon payment of a 25 gp joining fee plus a monthly 6 gp membership fee. Those who miss a single month's payment can simply make it up by a double payment the next month but those who lapse more than one month in payments must pay the joining fee again. Most of the players consider it worth it, though; winning just one treasure can cover the costs of fees for a decade or more. Past treasures have always included minor magical item (usually healing potions, but sometimes glow-at-a-touch "endless candles" that can be used as room lighting in a dwelling or other small useful item) in addition to a bag of cans and some attractive piece of jewelry.

There have always been rumors that various sinister individuals and groups use the Game as cover for illicit activities, and certainly real crimes have been committed at Game events and revels or alongside Game play, ranging from picked pockets to rumors (never proven) of kidnappings and even murders. These suspicions have kept members of the Advanced Specialist Patrol of the City Watch and other organizations (such as the Silent Network) playing the Game since its inception, leading in turn to many small merchants and other citizens muttering darkly about "irresponsible vandals" and "tax money sponsoring folk playing at children's games."

The recent war disrupted a particularly complicated Game plot thread centered on a deaf mute aasimon and a wily alu-fiend (and their various unwitting agents and shapechanging minions) who had come to the city, each seeking for a hidden artifact stashed in some cellar or closet that could allow its wielder to rule a kingdom of monsters (just what type—illithids, fiends, beholders, grell—participants could not agree). Each, naturally, sought to prevent the other from gaining the artifact and planted spies among the other's agents. Many proclaimed it the best Game ever, and more than one Game player became convinced chat the plot was real or that at least there was—and presumably still is—a potent artifact of some sort hidden somewhere in or under the city, and that a lot of mysterious and covert groups are after it.

Since peace resumed to the Bluff, new Game threads have been started. The most popular centers on the belief that Gondegal, the so called "Lost King" of Cormyr, secretly married a hitherto unknown descendant of the kings of Westgate and had offspring, the "Night Princess." This mysterious human sorceress claims rightful rule over all Cormyr, Westgate, and the shorelands it dominates, she poses as a normal citizen of Ravens Bluff by day and plots to retake what is "rightfully hers" by night. Supported by a secretive cult chat commits murders and deals in lucrative contraband, the sinister Night Princess is moving steadily closer to seizing open rule over both her rightful territories. According to the Game, the "Cult of the Night Princess" numbers several prominent Ravenaar citizens among its members but both it and she are being manipulated from behind the scenes by some darker power—perhaps a lich. Since this Game thread started, disquieting rumors have begun to spread through the taverns of the Bluff; some citizens fear all of this may be just too close to reality for anyone's comfort. Oddly enough, some of the monsters featuring in this Game floating zombie torsos sos chat swing blades and hover as guardians where key clues lie hidden— have been seen in places which the Watch had not been told were part of the official Game events. Perhaps some prankster is simply confusing the issue, or perhaps the "Night Princess" story ran too close to some actual secret someone doesn't want to come out.

Less worrisome to Game organizers and Ravenaar citizens is the second current Game plot: the Saga of Lord Manymirrors,

one of the light, farcical bedroom-scandals-among-the-nobles frolics that are a favorite staple of Game-watchers and less adventuresome players. The fictitious Lord Manymirrors is a fat, pompous fop who discovers chat his wife has not only been unfaithful to him but that her lovers include (gasp!) commoners in need of money. Naturally, she's been supplying them with coin out of the Manymirrors vault, nearly emptying it in the process. Unfortunately, the Lord is a banker for a perpetually drunken group of Tantran wine merchants who now need some of their funds and have come staggering into the city to claim them. Players in this Game (loyal retainers of Lord Manymirrors) have to quickly find the missing money while Lord Manymirrors makes delaying excuses to gain them time, taking the Tantrans on a tavern crawl that descends from the city's finest wineries to its lowest dives. The money is stashed in a variety of bedchambers across the city where Lady Manymirrors keeps rendezvous with her lovers, each rented in her husband's name—to gain entrance, the Gamers must pretend to be Lord Manymirrors and win their way past skeptical doorwardens. Just to complicate matters, some lady pirates are also after the loot; masquerading as lingerie models displaying their wares as they visit Ravens Bluff, these ladies try to steal the coins before the Game players can get them back into the Manymirrors vaults. What's more, Lady Manymirrors has boasted of her lovers' ardor to her noble lady friends, a succession of whom arrive, dressed in a wild exaggeration of fashionable costumes (hats crowned with small cartloads of fruit, trains that have to trundle along behind the wearer on carts, and so on) and try to throw themselves into the arms of the false Lord Manymirrors. As a final complication, Gamers who collect all the Mask tokens representing the various treasure stashes must return them to the Manymirrors vault, talking their ways past a riddling, poetry-reciting, tipsy "beholder" (actually an illusion, though a real *wand of paralyzation* stops players who try to rush through it) who guards the vault doors.

The organizers of these games keep their identities a great secret to avoid cheating (a band of thieves once bribed several of the actors and actresses playing parts in the game in order to find out where the final treasure was and then made off with it). It is known, however, that the Fellowship of Bards is heavily involved, and that the Players of the Ravens Bluff Playhouse fill many of the roles. Once or twice the plot has strayed perilously close to some current event in the city or parodied a public figure too obviously; perhaps this accounts for Lady Amber Lynn Thoden's known distaste for the event. But many of those who have participated come back year after year, sometimes assuming the same persona each time. A great deal of harmless fun goes on at these Games, and they seem likely to continue for years to come.

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Character Creation and Initial Rulings for Piratical Roleplay in...

Brethren of the Coast

At GEN CON® Game Fair '98, Iron Crown Enterprises officially presented their *Run out the Guns!* campaign, *Brethren of the Coast*, as an RPGA® Network LIVING™ campaign. Would-be sea dogs sailed the 17th century Carribean as privateers, smugglers, and pirates using the Rolemaster game rules.

Presented here, for the first time, are clarifications and rules updates for convention play of the *Run out the Guns!* boxed set. *RotG!* is available wherever fine games are sold.

General Rules

The Brethren of the Coast, sponsored by the RPGA® Network and Iron Crown Enterprises, gathers for regular play at conventions and gamedays throughout the year, raiding villages and sinking ships across the Caribbean. Network members may, if they wish, bring their own character to these events and risk all for treasure and glory on the high seas. Only the boldest of pirates will gain the treasure necessary to retire in the style that they deserve.

The player is responsible for keeping a copy of his or her character and a list of the belongings, wealth, ranks earned, and status of that character. Characters gain items, skill, status, and wealth during the course of tournament play.

All Brethren of the Coast tournaments must be individually sanctioned by the RPGA Network and ICE.

All characters must conform to both these guidelines and the guidelines presented in the *Run out the Guns!* set. Failure to conform will result in your character being banned from events. Repeated failures to conform will be punished by marooning: the player will be banned from Brethren activities and tournaments for a period of one calendar year from the end of the convention where the marooning took effect.

All rules questions must be directed to one of the following Governors:

- The Governor of Curacao, John W Curtis III
- The Governor of Jamaica, Jason O Hawkins
- The Governor of St. Thomas, Todd McGovern

The say of these governors on rules matters is final.

All character templates from the *Run out the Guns!* boxed set are allowed for character building, as are all background packages. Each character may only start with one template and two backgrounds. NO character may ever have more than three backgrounds (two starting and one bonus). Only a Governor may award bonus backgrounds.

Character templates and backgrounds introduced after the boxed set will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Template or background availability is based upon its first appearance and not its publication date; most templates and backgrounds will be released prior to publication. The following foundations are considered legal:

Released July 2, 1998 (Origins 98)

- English Former Officer (Ship's Master tier template)
- Dutch Barber-Surgeon (Surgeon tier template)

Released August 5, 1998 (GEN CON® Game Fair '98)

- The Irish Deserter (Sailor tier template)
- The French Fop (Warrior tier template)

The following new backgrounds are considered available for character creation:

Released August 5, 1998 (GEN CON 98)

- The Stow Away
- The Coxswain (Cox'un)
- The Prisoner of the Inquisition
- The Native Son

Grandfather clause:

Some backgrounds will be retired from service after a period of usage (for reasons known only to the shadowy and machiavellian Governors). Characters created with these backgrounds will remain legal, but no new characters will be allowed to take this background. Retired backgrounds will be listed in POLYHEDRON® Magazine.

Creating a character

Follow the instructions in the *Run out the Guns!* boxed set. Choose one character template and two background packages.

Characters start with equipment listed on those sheets. You may have up to 100 PoE (pieces of eight) worth of personal effects and gear purchased prior to play. A character may select one period-appropriate piece of non-standard equipment (not on the equipment list in the book). This item may not be a weapon or other piece of lethal or lethality-related equipment (i.e. a book of hymns is okay, a book of gunpowder recipes is not).

We strongly encourage all players to build their characters in groups at a convention or similar event (as opposed to beforehand). It is the opinion of the all-powerful Governors that the group-building process makes for better (and more realistic) pirates. It also ensures that the character mix is correct.

Naming

All characters in the Brethren of the Coast must have appropriate (historical-sounding) names. Silly, distracting, or vulgar names will not be entered.

Examples of good names:
Pierre LeGrande; Jens von Weert; Black Pete MacArdle

Examples of disallowed names:
@!&%^ing Bob the pirate; Moonbeam; Tarara Gundiay; Shriveled Johnson

Messes

Each character may carry two mess members with them after each "show." Players are responsible for keeping track of these people's vital stats (nationality, sailing ability, special skills). Players should keep fun and interesting messmates or sailors who enhance their character's own skills.

Ships

The owner of a ship must have a deed, and is responsible for keeping track of supplies and stores. The owner must keep a cargo manifest (although the purser should do the actual bookkeeping).

The armament of a ship will be recorded in the Brethren database, including cannons, muskets, and pistols. All unspecified muskets on a ship's manifest are assumed to be flintlock.

When a ship is captured, the crew decides upon who the new captain is to be. This can done be by any method agreed upon by the crew and new officers. This new captain gains a deed for that ship at the end of the "show."

The captain is responsible for the upkeep of his vessel. This includes all bills and fees.

A new captain may "officially" rename his ship once. Names must adhere to the aforementioned standards and reflect the campaign environment.

Examples: English ships are frequently named for Biblical figures, Greek heroes and gods, or historical persons of importance; therefore *Nemesis, Prometheus, Circe, Solomon*, and *King Lear* are all acceptable names while *Gordita, Bob's Barque*, and the *Surrey Scow* are not.

Cargo

Cargo is tracked with a notarized manifest for each ship. At the end of a convention, list the cargo carried by your ship on a cargo manifest form, and have it signed by your GM. If you do not have a signed manifest at the beginning of a convention, you are assumed to have the minimum cargo level as follows:

- 1 ton of extra sail
- 1 ton of repair supplies (bos'un's stores)
- 1 ton of lumber
- enough shot for each cannon to be fired 10 times
- enough powder for each cannon to be fired 10 times
- enough food and water for 10 days

A GM must be present to sell cargo. A manifest accompanies a ship deed. Only ships may keep manifests.

Money

At the end of sessions, 100 PoE money certificates will be given to players. All fractions of 100 PoE are assumed to be spent on expenses (i.e. ale, liquor, carousing, gambling). It is up to players to get treasure shares for their characters during the session. If a character parts company without a share or promise of a share, it may be considered lost (and is subject solely to the kindness of the captain: if the captain won't give you a share after the fact, no one will make him or her give it up).

Conduct

Due to the nature of this campaign, some nefarious behavior is bound to occur. Characters who behave in an honorable fashion will be reputed to be so. Those who behave in a dishonorable fashion will have poor reputations. Disreputable types are discernable during conventions.

Due to the nature of the RPGA, all players and characters are expected to behave in a civilized manner. This includes following the Customs of Piracy and Privateering. Persons behaving inappropriately will be exiled from the Brethren and asked never to play again.

The Customs of Piracy and Privateering

All ships seized under a Letter of Marque and Reprisal will be destroyed, disarmed, and/or given to a Colonial Governor as prize for the Crown. No privateer may claim a captured ship unless his or her former ship was destroyed in the taking.

Ships seized by pirates are traditionally disarmed and looted. Crews must be left with their ship, food, and water, or be marooned. Crewmen from a looted ship may be recruited for the pirate's crew.

If a ship is destroyed by a pirate or privateer, the crew must be taken on as recruits, prisoners, or be marooned on an island with fresh water and accessible food.

A ship's captain may challenge another ship's captain to a duel. Both may option to use a champion for this duel. All duels are to incapacitation (knocked overboard, severed sword arm, death, etc.). This does not include critical hits resulting in death. Both parties duelling must agree to the terms of the duel and anything may be the prize of a duel. NPCs will have a reason to duel and something to gain. Duels may be fought with sword (any 1H edged weapon) or pistol. The Bookeeper's ability may add another realm to a duel (chess).

All females are to be treated as ladies. This rule even extends to PCs. Lady pirates may take on traditionally male roles and may even opt to fight their own duels although they are expected to reciprocate, and treat all males as gentlemen.

Pirates in a pirate-haven (Port-Royal, St. Thomas, Curacao, and Tortuga) are expected to aid in the defense of that

Brethren of the Coast

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place and defer to the judgement of their hosts (the English, Danish, Dutch, and French, respectively) and their rules and laws. Pirates who engage in treachery against other pirates in a pirate-haven will be branded as traitors to the Brethren. Not that this will ruin your chances at success.

Special Notes and Rulings:

The following rules and specifications will not make much sense without having already played *RotG!* or owning the set.

Journeyman

If the GM starts the adventure in St Thomas, you may start with a random mess of five sailors. The GM may opt to circumvent this for story purposes. If you spend all of your time casting cannons, don't be surprised if the ship sails without you.

Bookkeeper

During a single convention, if you blackmail one associate, there will be a 500 PoE bounty on your head, if you blackmail two, there will be a 2,000 PoE bounty, and if you blackmail three associates, there will be a 5,000 PoE bounty. The GM may opt to raise these. Your friend is considered a Landsman.

Your chess playing ability may be used in place of a duel. You may opt out of a duel if you offer this alternative and it is denied (although you may still "lose face" over the matter).

Master's Mate

You may only use the cannon-finding skill once per convention. The GM may opt to change the location. The use of this ability may be vetoed by a GM.

You may permanently alter the location of your female friend, but she must live in a french port other than Port-de-Paix. Please be coll about this and don't change it every con.

Sorry, Insurance coverage does not extend from convention to convention.

During tourney play, if you have used the loan ability and not paid it back before the finals end, 500 PoE will be deducted from your treasure take (or all of it, if it is less). You can only sell one logbook per convention.

All rudders must be provided by you. In other words, you can bring two of your own B&W Caribbean maps with you.

Old Salt

After using your surplus ability, You have to call at another port before you can use it again.

Feel free to rename Petrus Berlage with any other appropriate Dutch name. Petrus has no special abilities.

You can only use the commodity finding ability every 14 days.

Shipwright's Apprentice

Only one jib per ship. You must ship aboard the vessel with the jib for it to function. A Jollyboat requires 800 lbs of lumber. You can only sell one Jollyboat in a given port each convention. A Launch requires 2,000 lbs of lumber. You can only sell one Launch in a given port each convention.

You can only perform your gunnery upgrade once per ship. You can 'rent' this ability to other captains, but if it is damaged (by mechanism of a critical hit or by direct action against it by PC or NPC), it is lost. If the upgrade is lost, it can be rebuilt by any shipwright's apprentice. The captain must record on the back his ship deed that it has a gunnery upgrade. Both you and a GM must sign it.

Your other abilities may be rented to shipowners as well. In any case, you must be present to use the ability (you are renting yourself, not the talent).

If you decide to go into shipbuilding, you will be automatically retired.

Smuggler

Your person and item finding abilities may only be used once every seven days.

The GM sets the price of a person's freedom in Havana. His say is final.

The ransom is as follows in PoE (including the 50% discount)

- Seaman: 5
- Spanish Privateer officer: 25
- Spanish Flag officer: 35
- Catholic Priest: 50 (this WILL upset a crew; they are superstitious)
- Spanish captain: 75
- Spanish low or colonial Nobleman: 100
- Spanish middle Nobleman: 150
- Castillian Nobleman: 350
- Royal: 1000
- Low Church official: 65
- Monseigneur: 500
- Bishop: 1000
- Grand Inquisitor: 5000 (but wouldn't you just rather shoot him?)

The amount of a town bribe (for reparis/resupply) is up to the GM, whose say is final.

The cost of an sail date bribe is (3x ship displacement in tons) PoE for each of the sail date and the manifest. Less money may be spent, but this information my be suspect.

Detailed information about a port can include any of the following points of information:

- Nationality
- Commodity prices for sale
- Commodity prices for purchase
- Names of gov't officials
- Size of military garrison within 25% if there is no fort present
- The presence and basic layout of a fort
- The mode (most commonly occuring) size of any shore-based cannons known.
- The number of any shore-based cannons (within 25%)
- Names of Church officials
- Prominent merchants' names and trades
- Smuggling contacts (fences) (75% reliable)
- Names of prominent (read PC and big NPC) ship captains who have visited in last 90 days.
- Quarantines
- Wars/battles
- Unusual laws or customs
- Peculiarities of local government

This does not give the following information:

- Sail dates of specific ships
- Cargo manifests
- ANY other specific ship information

Bosun's Mate

The hearing ability still requires a successful "Easy" awareness maneuver.

The intimidation ability should be roleplayed with other PCs. Some PCs (esp the Duellist and Escaped Slave) should not be affected by this ability.

Faked beating means 1/4 damage.

The GM need not offer special abilities for messmates, you must ask.

The Duelist

The insult ability does not put words in your mouth, you should prepare a list. The GM should give you an advantage against anyone but another Duelist.

The repair ability for small arms takes 1d10 hours to complete.

Seasoned Pilot

It takes 30 days at sea (in the area to be charted) to complete a chart. You cannot be the only navigator aboard. Supplies cost 50 poE for each set of charts. While you are making charts, you will have an encounter every other day (minimum), due to the fact that your ship is moving slowly and obviously along the shoreline. The sale value of a chart is up to individual GMs, but will never exceed 1000 PoE.

The GM determines whether or not and where you can sell a chart. All rudders must be provided by you. In other words, you can bring two of your own B&W caribbean maps with you. The superstition ability is self-explanatory: it is completely up to individual GMs.

Steward

The cask quality ability requires a successful Awareness roll. You may choose what lands your special recipes are from, this does not impart any kind of special or arcane knowledge. The GM gets to place all swine ranches on the map.

Surgeon's Mate

Laudanum is alcohol and opium. It is the most powerful pain reliever in the 17th century besides deep shock. Unfortunately, it is not feasible to monitor the spread of the tourniquet ability, so everyone is assumed to have learned it unless they declare otherwise.

Buccaneer

RR bonus vs fever applies to all disease. You have to have a distillery to make rum. It takes 3 days per quarter cask to make rum. It takes one day to build a bucan. It takes 1d10 hours to repair a musket and 1d10 PoE in parts. The GM decides what improvised weapons are nearby.

Carpenter's Mate

Any time bonuses for time are figured after your 10% is deducted. (All time bonuses are multiplicative, not additive). A Jollyboat requires 800 lbs of lumber. You can only sell one Jollyboat in a given port each convention. A Launch requires 2,000 lbs of lumber. You can only sell one Launch in a given port each convention. The amount charged for beautification work is not fixed. You can set and haggle for prices. You can rent this out to other captains. This does not add to the sale price/value of a ship.

(Re: the pump unjamming ability) A crisis refers to a single combat session (which can include several ship-to-ship battles and boarding actions.

Hugenot Preacher

You may borrow money from your uncle only once per convention, and you can only get one person out of jail per convention. The GM determines which French sailors are Huguenot and then those will automatically join your mess until it is full. You may choose which sailors join if there are more than your mess can hold. You must take Huguenot sailors before others.

Quartermaster

You cannot operate the cannons and give directions to the helm simultaneously. Re: the log float ability, yes, this means that you always know the speed of your ship. "Your quarterdeck" and "your mere presence on the quarterdeck" mean that you must be the ship's master, quartermaster, or captain.

Escaped Slave

The "few" that will not cross you does not necessarily mean PCs.

(Re: the information ability and the slave rescue ability) any slave that you take with you is considered to have 'escaped.' They are wanted for return and you are subject to hanging if you are caught. You may always opt to not take information, but if you take it, you must free the slave or you will lose this ability. After the first voyage (i.e. one round of tournament play) with a group of escaped slaves, each has an individual chance of 50% of deserting. Those that desert are assumed to have been caught and you are exonerated of aiding them in escape.

The sugar ability means that given one week, you can turn 2 tons of sugar cane into six hogsheads (400 lb bales) of sugar. Every two assistants that you have will halve this time. You can process more than 2 tons at a time (the return is 60%). Equipment to process sugar costs 300PoE pre 2 tons of capacity and can be purchased in Nevis, St Kitts, St Thomas, Hispaniola, San Juan, and Antigua.

Your influence ability is only useful with seamen. A seaman has a 25% chance of being affected by this.

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RPGA Tournament Request Policies

Recently the Network revised its policies on tournament requests. Presented here is the complete statement of our policies, for your ease of use. This policy statement supercedes the information in the Membership Handbook v1 and all older tournament request forms which do not agree entirely with this statement..

The RPGA Network provides quality roleplaying tournaments in a variety of game systems to conventions and game days. One-round, two-round, and three-round events are available. A round is one four-hour game session. We provide the event, the scoring materials, and prize certificates for the winners. You need only provide the judges, the location, and the players.

To ease the ordering process, and help you quickly decide what you want for your particular needs, we have the following policies established for tournament ordering. By understanding them, you can take maximum advantage of the Network's tournament program.

The RPGA has two types of roleplaying tournaments: those which provide characters (called Classic) and those for which the players bring characters (called Campaign). We also provide team events, generally are in the Classic format. Campaign events fall into one of our LIVING™ Campaigns: LIVING CITY™, LIVING DEATH™, LIVING JUNGLE™, *Virtual Seattle*, or *Threads of Legend*.

A list of our available tournaments can be found on our website. This list is updated dynamically, so it is always current. You can see the play history of events, in order to better plan your tournaments. Go to "Tournaments and Conventions" from the home page to find the list of available scenarios. You can get the list by sending a SASE to HQ as well, but without the play histories.

Tournament Requests

A convention may request four (4) total events per day of the convention, up to a total of 16 events. Of these, two tournaments from each of our LIVING Campaign settings may be requested per day of the con. So a three-day convention could request 6 LIVING CITY events, 4 LIVING DEATH events, and two AD&D events for a total of 12 events. These may be of any length that we offer (1, 2, or 3 rounds).

Conventions which have run 25 tables at past shows may submit new events written for the convention. A convention can submit up to 12 total rounds of new events for the convention, or the maximum allowed for the length of the convention, whichever is smaller. Thus a show which is allowed 8 total events can submit 8 rounds of new events, and one that is allowed 16 total events can submit 12 new rounds. Of these, two may be from each LIVING Campaign, so a convention can submit two new LIVING CITY events, and/or two new LIVING DEATH events, etc.

Conventions which ran 100 tables the previous year may submit three new events in each LIVING Campaign setting. Conventions which ran 300 tables the previous year may submit four new events in each LIVING Campaign setting. This number of tables is defined per location, so a convention which runs at five sites uses the number of tables run at the largest site to determine eligibility.

New events are defined as those sanctioned for the convention or within 30 days prior to the convention. Trading with cons in the same month to get more new events is not allowed.

Deadlines.

Tournament requests are due ONE MONTH in advance of the convention start date if all the scenarios are in the tournament library. This applies whether the tournaments are requested online, a form is mailed, or a form is faxed. The form must be received (not postmarked) one month in advance.

Requests which contain new scenarios (as defined above) must be received SIX MONTHS in advance of the convention start date. Submitted tournaments are due six months in advance without exception.

Scoring and Paperwork

The RPGA maintains an international ranking system for roleplayers.All players and judges of RPGA-sanctioned events receive experience points towards their international ranking. These points work like experience points in the AD&D game, in that the more you have, the higher your level. Failure to fill out these packs properly may result in the disqualification of the event players or judges, and the denial of future convention tournament requests. Members expect their points from your events, and it is your duty to do as much as you can to ensure that they get them.

Completed scoring packs should be sent to RPGA Headquarters as soon after the convention as possible. They are due within four weeks of the convention date. To help get scoring data posted more quickly, we have some incentives.

- If you return the completed scoring packs within four weeks of the convention's ending date, then you receive a credit of 10 cents per completed packet towards future orders.
- There is a program available which allows you to enter the scoring data yourself for the convention, and send us a data file. If you enter the data, you can receive a credit of 20 cents per completed packet towards future orders. Contact HQ for details and to get the program. You must send the completed packets to HQ in addition to the data file, but you can email the file and send the packets by mail.
- If you both enter the packets and return the data and packets within four weeks of the convention ending date, you get 30 cents a packet in credit towards future orders.

Fees and Prizes

A fee of $5 per round must be paid for each Network tournament round if a valid email address which can receive file attachments up to 1.5 MB is provided with the order. If a valid email address is not provided, the fee is $10 per round. This fee is per tournament round ordered, not per table expected to run. Running 10 tables of a single tournament costs the same as running two tables of it. Tournaments will not be mailed if the event fees are not paid.

Tournament request received after the deadline are assessed a 100% late fee, so if the request is late the tournaments cost twice as much. If the request contains submitted events and is not received by the six-month deadline, some or all of the submitted events will be replaced with tournaments from the library. Under no circumstances will we honor a tournament request received within two weeks of the convention.

RPGA Network HQ provides prizes for winners of sanctioned events. These prizes are in the form of the prize certificates described in issue 131.

Benefit Tournaments.

All proceeds from a benefit tournament must go to a legitimate charity; a copy of the cancelled check to the charity must be submitted to verify Benefit status.

Advertising.

If you plan to run 101 or more tables of RPGA events at your convention, you are required to run a RPGA ad in your onsite convention program booklet. This is in addition to any monetary cost.

Sanctioning Limit

The maximum number of tournament rounds which will be sanctioned for any one calendar month (in terms of conventions happening that month) is 20. This means that if a convention in June submits new events, then those events count towards the limit for June. These are divided as follows:

- 5 LIVING CITY, including Procampur
- 7 other TSR-based game systems (AD&D classic, LIVING DEATH, LIVING JUNGLE, ALTERNITY®, SAGA® System)
- 8 non-TSR games

In addition to the 20 per month, there is an "overhead" of tournament rounds into which the GEN CON® Game Fair, *Weekend in Ravens Bluff*, and LIVING CITY high level campaign events fall. These do not count against the limit per month for sanctioning. High level LIVING CITY events do count against the total allowed LIVING CITY events for a convention, but not against the new event limit.

If more than the maximum number to be sanctioned are submitted, these criteria will determine which are accepted:

- Tournaments which arrive late will not be considered for the month or convention for which they were submitted.
- Tournaments considered to be of better quality will be sanctioned over those of lesser quality. Determination of quality is the final decision of the RPGA staff.
- Events needed to fill a dearth in the library will be chosen over those not needed to build up the library.
- Tournaments will not be considered on a first-come, first-taken basis, though good events which arrive earlier will have priority over good events which arrive closer to the deadline should we need to make such a distinction.

Events below our standards of quality, or which do not fit into a LIVING campaign setting, will be rejected. Events which are deemed otherwise acceptable but are denied because the limit has been reached for a given month may be re-designated for a later convention. In other words, if we have a really good month, we will take the events for later conventions.

Exclusive events, which are events sanctioned only for a specific convention and then retired, will not be sanctioned for any convention other than the GEN CON Game Fair.

Exceptions

GEN CON Game Fair and *Weekend in Ravens Bluff* are exceptions to these rules, and may break any of them. They should not be used as a precedent.

If a convention organizer has a cool idea for doing something really unique, we will be happy to listen and perhaps bend the rules to accommodate. We do not want to deny something that would be great fun simply because of these rules. However, anything new that a convention tries should not be taken as a precedent or a modification of these rules. "Because they did it" is not a sufficient reason for someone else to do it.

Why a sanctioning limit?

This limit exists to address two problems. First, workload management. There are a limited number of staff persons to review and edit tournaments, and therefore the influx of tournaments must controlled. Convention coordinators used to control how many events we received. This often resulted in some months with none, and a four-month period in the spring in which 70 tournaments must be reviewed. To better review and process new submissions in a timely manner, we must regulate how many of them we face. This limit does not change the number of events we sanction in a year, it just re-distributes the load evenly.

The second reason has to do with tournament play-through. As the LIVING CITY program in particular grows, we find we are sanctioning more and more tournaments for the same number of players. Further, once a game day or small convention uses one of our events in a region, no other convention in the region wants it, even though only 24 people may have played it at that one usage. This is a waste of sanctioned events and the effort that goes into sanctioning them. We hope to encourage conventions and game days to use events which have small player counts in the same region.

We know this will cause a problem in the LIVING CITY tournament availability immediately (until the new flow is adjusted to), and so we intend to re-release some older retired LIVING CITY events which many players missed.

Other steps are in the works to ease the sanctioning burden, and we hope that eventually we will be able to raise this limit again.

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Two Easy Ways to Request Tournaments

1. Use the online ordering system on the website

2. Get a tournament request form and mail or fax it. Request forms ar available in the membership handbook and online. Fax to 425-226-3182

The Powers That Be

Kurell

by Eric Boyd

The Bitter Hand, the Avenger. the Vengeful Knave, the Scorned Heart, He Who Must Possess.

Lesser Power of Pandemonium, CN
Portfolio: Jealousy, revenge, thievery
Aliases: None
Domain Name: Pandesmos/House of the Bitter Hand
Superior: None
Allies: Joramy, Ralishaz, Trithereon
Foes: Allitur, Dalt, Heironeous, Nerull, Norebo, Olidammara, Pholtus, Rudd, St. Cuthbert, Syrul, Xan Yae, Zilchus
Symbol: A grasping hand, fingers pointed upwards, holding a coin split in two
Wor. Align.: CG, N, CN, NE, CE

Kurell (cur-EL) is the Oeridian deity of jealousy and revenge, and a patron of thieves, bandits, and other rogues. The Bitter Hand is venerated by those whose hearts are consumed with greed and by those who feel scorned and burn for revenge, whether it be just or the product of a fevered imagination. Kurell is called on by individuals from all walks of life, often in secret, whose selfish desires overwhelm their altruistic interests.

Said to be the younger brother of Zilchus, Kurell has long been estranged from his elder sibling. According to myth, Kurell was once romantically linked with Atroa, while Zilchus had won the heart of Sotillon. Many cautionary tales relate how Kurell spurned Atroa's favor to seek the hand of his brother's consort. Kurell is said to have anonymously attacked Zilchus in an attempt to eliminate his sibling rival, stealing some of his divine power in the process, but the Lord of Coins survived thanks to his extensive connections with other deities who came to his aid. Kurell failed in his suit of Sotillon when his guilt was revealed by chance, losing both Atroa's affections and Zilchus's fraternalism in the process as well. Although Atroa and even Zilchus might well forgive Kurell if he ever repented, the Bitter Hand's jealousy and bitterness have forged a prison of the heart from which the god has never escaped. In his anger, Kurell fled to the madness of Pandemonium, intending to drown his sorrows in the River Styx, but the Styx's waters hold no absolution for Kurell. The Scorned Heart now dwells in self-imposed exile, consumed with jealousy and ever plotting his eventual vengeance against those who have slighted him.

Kurell has few allies, finding solace only in the wrath of Joramy, the ill-luck of Ralishaz, and Trithereon's thirst for vengeance. The Bitter Hand guards his portfolios carefully, contesting with any power whose faithful are drawn from the ranks of his potential worshipers (a group which includes all rogues). Those who seek to stymie Kurell's acquisitive nature draw his wrath as well, including those who govern trade and those who oppose him on moral grounds, such as Allitur, Heironeous, Pholtus, and St. Cuthbert.

Kurell is a bitter, selfish power who covets what he cannot possess yet finds no solace in what he has seized. He values only what is precious to others, finding some measure of satisfaction only in engendering a sense of loss in others. The Vengeful Knave is given to sullen brooding, interspersed with bouts of fitful anger. He perceives slights in the most harmless of discourse and plots revenge against all who have drawn his ire. The madness of Pandemonium has only worsened Kurell's sense of isolation, and his centuries of self-imposed exile have begun to take their toll.

The Church

Clergy: Clerics, specialty priests, thieves
Clergy's Align.: CG, N, CN, NE, CE
Turn Undead: C: Yes (if non-evil), SP: No, T: No
Cmnd. Undead: C: Yes (if evil), SP: No, T: No

All clerics and specialty priests of Kurell receive religion (Oeridian) as a bonus nonweapon proficiency.

Kurell is little known outside the folklore of traditional Oeridian society, as his faith is the primarily the province of self-absorbed individuals who have little inclination to express their faith. The Bitter Hand's church is strongest in the Old Aerdy East and the Bandit Kingdoms, although pockets are found across the Flanaess in most major cities with significant Oeridian ancestry. Kurell's followers are usually outnumbered in any given region by adherents of other, better-regarded gods of rogues such as Norebo or Olidammara and resent their second-class status. Followers of the Bitter Hand are commonly perceived as jealous, bitter, and easily insulted fools who want the world handed to them on a silver platter.

Kurell's houses of worship are rarely more than small chapels or simple shrines, as the god's faithful are often disinclined to share with their god unless pressed by his proxies. Temples that do exist are always hidden or made to look as simple as possible. Within such shrines, little effort is made towards displaying valuable items; the emphasis is on preventing theft (or reclamation) of items that others might want.

Novices of Kurell are known as Knaves. Full priests are called Covetous Rascals. Titles employed by Kurellian priests vary widely, but invariably convey the priest's

sense of entitlement to an object, a position, or the emotional attachment of another that is not currently possessed. For example, ere her fall, Hidden Guildmistress Sharyn Messandier chose her title in anticipation of the day that she would replace Org Nenshen as the open leader of the thieves' guild of Greyhawk. High-ranking priests are collectively known as the Lords Avengant. Specialty priests are known as coveters. The clergy of Kurell includes humans (92%), half-orcs (5%), half-orcs (2%), and a handful of other races (1%). Those of human ancestry include those of Oeridian (73%), Flan (3%), Suloise (1%), Baklunish (1%), Olman (1%), Rhennee (1%), and mixed (20%) ancestry. Kurell's clergy includes specialty priests (including multi-classed specialty priests) (44%), clerics (including multi-classed clerics) (34%), and thieves (32%), and is split nearly two-to-one between males (62%) and females (38%).

Dogma: Desires must be seized, for taking brings joy. Suffering must be avenged, for only retribution alleviates loss. The world is filled with those deserving of scorn who do not deserve the wealth and power and luck by which they have benefited. Take what is rightfully yours when the time is right, and thus the shackles of life shall be thrown off forever.

Day-to-Day Activities: Clergy of Kurell are consumed with jealousy and vengeance for perceived insults, both great and small. Many make their living through theft. Most clergy members preach only through example or when spending effort to gain a convert may bring some advantage.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: Followers of Kurell eschew formal holidays, with the exception of the Suntheft of Zilchus, observed annually on Midsummer Night, the fourth day of Richfest. From dusk to dawn, Kurellites observe the anniversary of their god's betrayal by the Scheming Triad (Zilchus, Atroa, and Sotillon) with a string of robberies conducted during the general revels. Items seized during annual observation are always sacrificed to the god (and vanish at the end of such ceremonies). Otherwise, followers of Kurell express piety only after a successful theft, with a prayer for the god not to seize items for himself.

Major Centers of Worship: Kurell's most prominent temple is the Vault of the Hidden Horde, in the catacombs beneath the city of Kalstrand, the newly proclaimed capitol of the United Kingdom of Ahlissa where the populace worships the Oeridian pantheon almost exclusively and where organized thievery is rampant. Arch-Avenger Vensch Estende (CN hm SP14/T12) secretly presides over all three rival thieves guilds active in Kalstrand and dreams of the day when Overking Xavener dances to his whim as well.

Affiliated Orders: Although Kurell's followers are found in thieves' guilds across the Flanaess, few such organizations are dedicated exclusively to the Bitter Hand. However, small cells of Kurell's worshipers are found in the ranks of many such guilds, always plotting their eventual and "rightful" assumption of power. Such cells collectively compose the Legion of the Bitter Hand, but given the high level of distrust which divides even fellow cultists of Kurell, the Legion is a single organization in name only. Rival claimants in Rookroost and Stoink to the Legion's leadership have further weakened this disparate order of rogues.

Priestly Vestments: Ceremonial garb includes a golden half-mask and a plain, hooded cloak that masks face and body. Such cloaks are lined with rare materials such as the pelt of a silver fox, and adorned with small tokens precious only to those from whom they were stolen. The holy symbol of the faith is a holy symbol constructed of precious gems and metals stolen from another priest and reconsecrated to the Bitter Hand.

Adventuring Garb: Followers of Kurell favor arms, armor, and equipment of rogues. Leather items, particularly armor, are commonly tinted dark red to represent the bitterness that flows from the god's broken heart.

Specialty Priests (Coveters)

Requirements:	Dexterity 14, Wisdom 9
Prime Req.:	Dexterity, Wisdom
Alignment:	CG, CN, CE
Weapons:	Any
Armor:	Leather, padded leather, studded leather, elven chain mail; no shield
Major Spheres:	All, chaos, charm, divination, healing, protection, sun
Minor Spheres:	Animal, necromantic, summoning, travelers
Magical Items:	As clerics and thieves
Req. Profs:	Disguise or forgery
Bonus Profs:	Appraising, reading lips

- Coveters must be human, half-elf, or half-orc. Most coveters are Oeridian humans.
- Coveters can multi-class as coveter/thieves, if priest/thief multi-class combinations are allowable by race.
- Coveters take nonweapon proficiencies from the rogue group without penalty.
- Coveters can use thieves' cant.
- Coveters have some thieving skills, even if they are not multi-classed coveter/thieves. Single-classed coveters have the thieving skill base scores in the Player's Handbook (including Dexterity, race, and armor adjustments), but gain no initial discretionary points. Each time a single-classed coveter gains a level, 20 points may be applied to thief skills. No more than 15 points may be assigned to a single skill. Single-classed coveters cannot backstab as a thief, nor do they ever gain the ability to use magical scrolls that a thief does.
- Coveters can cast *audible glamer* (as the 1st-level wizard spell) or detect magic (as the 1st-level priest spell) once per day.
- At 3rd level, coveters can cast *alter self* or *misdirection* (as the 2nd level wizard spells) once per day.
- At 5th level, coveters can cast *emotion control* (as the 3rd-level priest spell detailed in the Tome of Magic) or *locate object* (as the 3rd-level priest spell) once per day.
- At 7th level, coveters can cast *clairaudience* or *suggestion* (as the 3rd-level wizard spells) once per day.
- At 10th level, coveters can cast *locate creature* (as the 4th-level priest spell) or *magic font* (as the 5th level priest spell) once per day.
- At 13th level, coveters can instill jealousy in another creature once per day, similar to the 4th-level wizard spell *emotion*. If the target fails a saving throw vs. spell, he becomes overwhelmed with jealousy, convinced that the being he holds most dear—lover, family member, or friend—has secretly fallen for another. ❑

LIVING DEATH™
Rules of Etiquette

Sir Alexander presented his cloak and hat to the butler. He was finally here, the mansion of Baron Treldown, and home of Lady Alexis Treldown, the Baron's niece and one of the most eligible women of Antwepen.

Sir Alexander paced nervously as he waited to be announced. Trying to steady his nerves he reviewed the Rules of Etiquette that he spent the last few months perfecting.

You see, Sir Alexander was not of the gentile. In fact, he was quite common. He wouldn't even be here if not for his unlikely rescue of the Crown Prince while working in Vissigen. Still, here he was. If he could just remember all the rules....

The world of the 1890s is one of proper mannerism. Behavior, dress, and breeding are the rules of the social elite. In order for PCs to mix with these social circles, they should be familiar with how they are expected to act. Failure to dress or act properly will quickly result in the expulsion or exclusion of the offender. To assist in training the PCs of the world of The Red Death, we have assembled many of the rules that Sir Alexander was required to learn when he was "blessed" with nobility based on recognition of his deeds. It is important to remember that a noble title was only powerful when recognized in behavior and manner.

Introductions

Introductions should always be taken seriously. Introducing another is a serious responsibility, not to be taken lightly. There are some easy rules to follow when making introductions.

- One always introduces a Gentleman to a Lady, never the Lady to the Gentleman. Etiquette dictates that the Lady is superior in the right of her gender, and the Gentleman should be honored at the introduction.
- A Lady's permission should always be obtained before introducing a Gentleman to her. This is of course, not the case when at a ball. While attending a ball, or evening party where there is dancing, the mistress of the house may introduce any Gentleman to any Lady without permission. This is after the mistress of the house ascertains that the Lady is willing to dance.
- Introduction given at a ball for purposes of conducting a Lady to the dance does not give a Gentleman permission to later bow to the Lady (which would display recognition).
- A Lady should never offer her hand to a Gentleman when introduced. She should limit her recognition to a slight bow.
- If a Gentleman enters a drawing-room and his name is wrongly announced or gone unheard in the buzz of conversation, he should immediately seek the mistress of the house. If he is a stranger to the mistress of the house, he should announce himself using the least of his titles, maintaining an etiquette of simplicity.

Conversation

Conversational etiquette is one of the most difficult to master. First of all when conversing in public it is morally limiting to exclude those present from any conversation that you participate within. The three rules to remember are namely; tact, a good memory, and a fair education.

- Remember in all ways, "slang" is beyond vulgar.
- The use of proverbs in polite conversation is equally vulgar. Puns, unless they rise to the rank of witticism, are to be avoided.
- Never introduce the topic of religion into social conversation.
- Never interrupt. Interrupting a speaker is as rude as stepping deliberately in the path of a strolling couple.
- Gentleman should never use a classical quotation in the presence of Ladies without first apologizing for, or translating it.
- Only individuals of ill-breeding whisper to each other in polite society. Likewise, it is impolite to hold conversation in a language that all present cannot understand.
- If a foreigner is a guest at a dinner party or society function, and does not speak English sufficiently, it shows proper breeding to hold the conversation in a language the guest understands.

Sir Alexander listened closely as he was finally introduced to the assembled nobles of Belgium. He walked slowly across the room. There she was, Lady Alexis Treldown, speaking with a few of the other ladies of society.

After a short time, the Baroness Treldown approached him. "We welcome you to our home Sir Alexander. If it pleases you to dance, I could introduce you to my niece, Alexis?"

It was better than he had hoped. With great anticipation he walked over to where Lady Alexis spoke with another charming young woman. The Baroness introduced him to Lady Alexis and her friend visiting from Paris.

Unfortunately the two woman were speaking in fluent French. Although Sir Alexander attempted to politely greet the woman in French, his French lessons were far from complete. "Bonjour Mademoiselles", he stuttered.

"You have learned French? Are you studying with Monsieur Robert? I studied with him for many years," Lady Alexis replied moving the conversation smoothly into English, obviously well-versed in proper behavior and etiquette.

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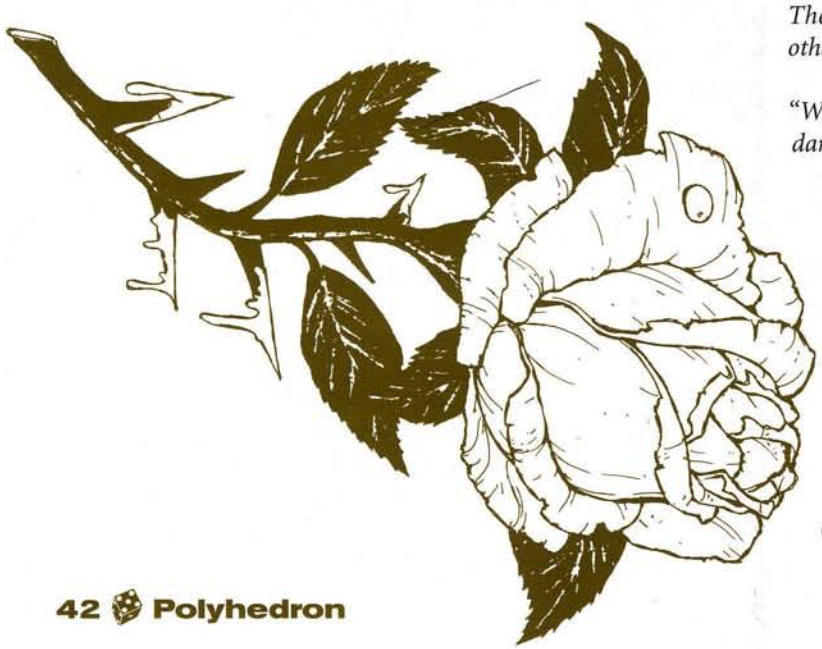

Internet 101

by Ed Gibson

Welcome back for the second installment of Internet 101. This issue offers more information which you can use in your modern horror, science-fiction, or superhero campaign. This month we're going to touch upon crime and criminals, in keeping with the issue's theme of thieves.

legal advice

You can't have criminals without laws for them to break. Fortunately, information on state and federal laws is available from a number of web sites. A recommended site is <http://www.lawstreet.com/lawguide/index.html>. The first page provides access to federal information including bankruptcy, copyright, civil rights, employment, consumer and immigration laws. There is a pull-down list from which you can select a specific state. The state information includes criminal, traffic, divorce and real estate laws. The law information should be used to add realism to your roleplaying campaign, it is not a substitute for professional legal advice in real life.

Now that you have a crime for the PCs to investigate, whether to find the guilty party or to clear their own names, you need to present the information so that it looks realistic. Contrary to the impression which has been given by television shows such as "COPS," police spend a huge amount of time completing paperwork. Since the officer may be called into court to testify on any case, the paperwork must be accurate and must be complete enough so that he can remember the case in detail, possibly years later.

crimescene

The following site presents a realistic look at the reports and other information which goes into a crime investigation. Please note this is an entertainment site: the crimes are fictional and the participants are actors. While any injuries are created with make-up, some are quite realistic and may be unsettling to sensitive viewers. The URL is <http://www.crimescene.com>.The initial page has information on the active and closed cases. Viewers are encouraged to help "solve" the cases and an email address is provided for readers to contact the "detective" who is working on the cases. A sample case (no objectionable material) is located at <http://www.crimescene.com/macy/index.html>. You can to access case materials such as: Witness Interviews, Evidence Items, Biographical Briefs and Press Items. The evidence items include lab testing reports, car accident reports, and an abbreviated autopsy report. If you use one of these cases as a blueprint to create an adventure for your PCs, you will have a much more realistic adventure. It's important to know your players and make sure none of them are going to be upset by the information you present. For example, the autopsy report provided in the Macy case is a short, sanitized effort; more detailed reports can be found on the Internet if you look.

most wanted

Okay, now the PCs are hunting down the bad guys or even better, being framed for a crime they didn't commit. There's nothing that really brings the feeling of being hunted like a wanted poster. So, go to <http://www.usdoj.gov/marshals/wanted/chism.html>. A warning and a tip to get the most out of the Internet: this person may be captured and taken off the list by the time you read this article. In this event, go back up one level (i.e. <http://www.usdoj.gov/marshals/wanted>). You will see other wanted individuals to access. This technique of going back up a level is useful not only if the site isn't found, but also if a link takes you deep into a web site. By backing up, you may uncover other interesting topics. Once you pull up the wanted poster, save it to a file. You can then edit the file to make a wanted poster for anyone. One note, the photo won't show up unless you edit the Hyper Text Mark-up Language (HTML) code to point to a photo on your system. Or you can use a photocopier to insert the picture in the right place. Many Kinko's have scanners so you can have pictures of your players scanned in and put their faces on the wanted posters. If there are major criminals, they may make the FBI's ten most wanted list <http://www.fbi.gov/mostwant/tenlist.htm>. You can save this as a file and insert new photographs, but if you can't use HTML, it's much easier to print the screen off and then cut and paste new photographs on a photocopy. There are a number of other sites where you can pull off mug shots.

One final point: while using criminal names and faces is suitable for your home campaign, don't do it in an RPGA Network tournament. This is a matter of courtesy, since it's possible someone related to the person could play the event.

That's all for this issue; if you have any questions or suggested sites, send them to <polyhedron@wizards.com>. ❑

URLs you can Use (for your game)

Federal and state laws:
<http://www.lawstreet.com/lawguide/index.html>
FBI's ten most wanted list:
<http://www.fbi.gov/mostwant/tenlist.htm>
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VOTE RIGHT! make judge standards more standard

by Laura Moody Harvey

In a recent role-playing tournament, the players sitting on either side of me just happened to be an orc and a halfling (this is the honest to goodness truth—I'll swear to it on a stack of POLYHEDRON*). They were great role players. The orc played a half-elven mage with a penchant for the arts, and the halfling kept everyone at the table in stitches with her rendition of a human berserker. But for all that we got along during the course of play, things seemed to fall apart when it came to voting.*

"I had a super time," cooed the halfling. "I'm going to give the judge all fives."

"That's ridiculous," snarled the orc. "How's the judge going to learn anything if we don't beat him up a little bit? I'm giving him all ones—except for organization, where I'm giving him a two." The conversation went downhill from there.

It occurred to me, as the orc tried to kick the frothing halfling from his leg, that all of this contention could have been avoided if only there were a standard to which players could refer in order to rate their judge. And so I took it upon myself to embark upon a quest for this standard.

As luck would have it, I found what I was looking for upon my return home. My two young daughters, being virtuous and occasionally sticky, knew exactly where to look. They directed me to a loathsome magical creature that happens to live at the bottom of our diaper pail. This creature produced three vellum scrolls (don't ask me how he got them) and handed one to me, saying, "Herein is the standard by which to rate your judge. Feast upon the words. Ponder the magnitude of that which is—"

"Thanks!" I said, grabbing the other two scrolls and slamming the lid shut. My quest completed, I sat down at the kitchen table, broke the seal, and began to read.

ORGANIZATION

refers to the physical preparedness of the judge—did the judge have all the materials he needed on hand, had he physically prepared handouts, and did he maintain control of the table.

Poor: PC handouts aren't provided. The GM forgot his rulebooks and his dice and he hasn't got copies of the judging sheet or the player information sheet for you. ("Map? Was I supposed to give you a map?") The GM allows noisy PCs to monopolize play.

Fair: The GM has the materials, but spends a lot of time searching during transitions. ("Now, where did I put that....") The GM spends too much time with some PCs, not enough with others.

Average: The tempo of play is decent due to organization of materials. The PCs each get a reasonable amount of play time.

Good: The GM has prepared ahead of game time by cutting out certificates, reprinting hard-to-read player handouts, and filling in the top of the voting sheets. ("Scissors? I don't need no stinking scissors!")

Super: The GM has not only prepared the materials ahead of time, but makes PC hand-outs look authentic by using artistic touches, brings a stopwatch for those time-sensitive encounters, and creates specialized props. ("Nice puzzle Bob, but just in case I accidentally spring the trap, is the needle really poisoned?")

KNOWLEDGE OF SCENARIO

refers to the mental preparation the judge has put forth. It refers to how well the GM knows the scenario packet that was provided to them. Special consideration should be given to the judge who is asked an hour before the game time to run an unknown scenario.

Poor: The GM has obviously never read the scenario.

Fair: The GM makes frequent mistakes concerning NPCs. He doesn't know where the course of action will take you next. He is unfamiliar with classic characters' personal information and spells. ("Your character is a battlerager?")

Average: The game tempo is good due to familiarity with the NPCs and encounters. He makes encounter transitions comfortably. He is generally familiar with the classic characters.

Good: The GM is capable of rewording boxed text. He has resolved any large inconsistencies within the scenario before the time of play. He can answer questions posed to the NPCs without having to refer to the scenario. ("No, my mother's brother's dog's cousin was not once owned by Elminster.")

Super: The GM seems to know by heart the scenario and all the statistics therein. ("It was actually my mother's sister's dog's cousin.") The GM referring to the scenario never interrupts the flow of the game. Even the small, difficult to discern, inconsistencies within the scenario are resolved before play time.

HANDLING THE UNEXPECTED

refers to those occasions when the GM must deal with circumstances that are not spelled out for him within the scenario. This might include PC or NPC death, the use of an unexpected magic item to circumvent combat, or a particularly creative solution to a problem that would force the GM to do some improvising.

Poor: The GM simply won't allow the PCs to do anything that might require him to be creative. ("Noooooooo....")

Fair: The GM is visibly taken aback (choking and yelling "ACK!" are clues) but after

some fumbling he makes an attempt to reconstruct the adventure.
Average: Though challenged, the GM attempts to take the unexpected event in stride. He finds a capable manner in which to proceed.
Good: Pausing only slightly, the GM leaps forward with a creative and well role-played solution of his own device. ("Well," says the venerable dragon, "I suppose that it wouldn't hurt for you to scratch my back. But I must warn you before you get too close that I'm really rather flatulent.")
Super: The GM handles the whole thing so smoothly that it seems as though it was an expected part of the scenario. Of course, if the recovery was really good, you might not know the GM wasn't expecting it. Ask your GM if anything was unexpected.

KNOWLEDGE OF GAME RULES

refers to knowledge of the role playing system being used, as opposed to the scenario itself.
Poor: The GM seems completely unfamiliar with the role playing system, as though he has never played it before. ("Fireball? Isn't that a type of candy?")
Fair: The GM seems familiar with the gaming system, but needs to look up every detail, as though they have never GM'ed before. ("Fireball–now what die do you roll for damage for that spell?")
Average: The GM seems familiar with the system, and most of its generalities, but still needs to look up more specific details. ("Fireball–what's the area of effect on that?")
Good: The GM is not only familiar with the general rules and details, but may have knowledge of more obscure data. ("Sorry, but transmuters can't cast fireballs.")
Super: The GM is a walking encyclopedia. He doesn't have to look it up and his information is correct. ("Let me tell you what third level spells are available to transmuters.")

ROLEPLAYING ABILITY

refers to the judge's ability to act out the NPCs and interact with the PCs.
Poor: The GM makes no attempt to act or interact, but reads the text with a deadpan face. When pressed for interaction he might say, "he feels mad," instead of "I'm mad."
Fair: The GM acts and interacts, but uses his own voice and demeanor at all times.
Average: The GM acts and interacts with enthusiasm, but the characters may be typical or even stereotypical (do all of the men sound like William Shatner and all of the women like Scarlett O'Hara?).
Good: The NPCs are distinct and well-acted, with a full range of emotions, unique personalities, distinct demeanors, and individual voices. There is a great deal of interaction with the PCs.
Super: NPCs are distinct, vibrant, and so well developed that each seems as though it was the GM's own personal character. ("Elvis? Is that you?")

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

refers not only to the average of all of the other categories, but to just how enjoyable the judge made the game for all those involved. It also allows the players to express concerns not covered within the five other categories.
Poor: The GM was a slug.
Fair: The GM may have been having a bad day, but so did everyone else.
Average: Fun was had by all.
Good: You try to get this judge as often as possible for future games.
Super: You think you'd like to invite this GM to judge at your private games.

How could the judge improve is, perhaps, the most important section under "Rate Your Judge". Judges are given scores not only to receive rankings, but also to allow them to examine their judging skills so that they know in what areas they excel and in what areas they need to improve. The GM who receives a poor score with no explanation may assume that either the player was having a bad day or the player never gives judges a high score.

Likewise, the GM who goes out on a limb with his role-playing and thereby makes the game the best you've ever experienced needs to know that his technique worked. Explaining the reason for the scores chosen and sharing other insights that aren't covered by the six rated categories is the player's opportunity to wield the sword of quality control. GMs, good and bad, can improve with a little insight, and, with a little impetus, the really hopeless ones might just decide they're better at playing than judging.

It occurred to me, as I finished reading the scroll that others might benefit from this information. Perhaps others' lives, like the halfling and the orc, might be more peaceful with this knowledge. And so it is with this in mind, gentle reader, that I share the contents of this treatise. Forthcoming are the scrolls "Voting Standards for the Best Player" and "Voting Standards for Rating the Scenario".

But before I send those out, I'll head back to the girls' room and empty the diaper pail. It wouldn't do to have that nasty little creature asking for a byline.

editor's note: This is the first of a three-part series on voting standards. Though these "standards" are phrased definitively, they are not intended to be a straitjacket for voting procedures. Use them as a guideline, or a jumping off point for your own discussions on the topic of voting.

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When: Oct 2-4 **Where:** Toledo, OH.
What: 8 LIVING CITY events including 4 New LC: LD, LJ, AD&D and Deadlands with a High Level Campaign feature event and the Andonian Games LC Interactive.
Cost: Contact for details
Contact: Call 1-800-529-EXPO or register online at <www.andonunlimited.com>.

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When: Oct. 16-18 **Where:** West Lafayette, IN
What: RPGA events, AD&D, GURPS, WoD, ALTERNITY, Star Wars, Deadlands, minis, TCGs, board games, demos, Vampire LARP, Gothic Dance Party, more!
Cost: pre-reg $15 til Aug 15, $20 at door
Contact: The Con Men, PO Box 1602, Portage, IN 46368 <conman1@gte.net>

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Cost: contact for details
Contact: <ShaunCon@aol.com>, <http://users.aol.com/RPGKC > 24-hour Hotline: 816/455-5020.

ARCHON 22

When: Oct 2-4 **Where:** Collinsville, IL–Gateway Conv. Center and Holiday Inn
What: writer workshops, panels, videos, art show. RPGA games, minis, board games, TCGs. Guests: James P. Hogan, Lester Smith, Ricky & Karen Dick.
Cost: adults $25 'til Aug 31, $30 after.
Contact: P.O. B. 8387, St. Louis, MO 63132. <www.stlf.org/archon/index.html>

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Contact: <scholars@ici.net> or call 508/279-1712

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Cost: contact for details
Contact: Dan Donnelly (GA) <RDRavens@aol.com>
Scott Thorne (IL) <CastleP@aol.com>
Ken Richart (CO) <KenCowrite@aol.com>
Ivan Mulkeen (Canada) <etrigan@idirect.com>
Keith Hoffman (OH) <KWH53@aol.com>
Convention Coordinator: Claire Hoffman: 5119 S. Tecumseh Rd, Springfield, OH, 45502-9758 USA , 937/322-1379

EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN '99

When: Mar 26-28 **Where:** Carbondale, IL–Southern Illinois University
What: RPGA events, AD&D, Shadowrun, Warhammer 40K, M:tG, other card, RPG, miniatures, and board games. No event fees!
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Contact: Joel Nadler at 618/529-4630 or email: <ECGamCon@aol.com> website: <www.siu.edu/~gamesoc>

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When: Oct. 16-18 **Where:** Asheville, NC–WNC Agricultural Center
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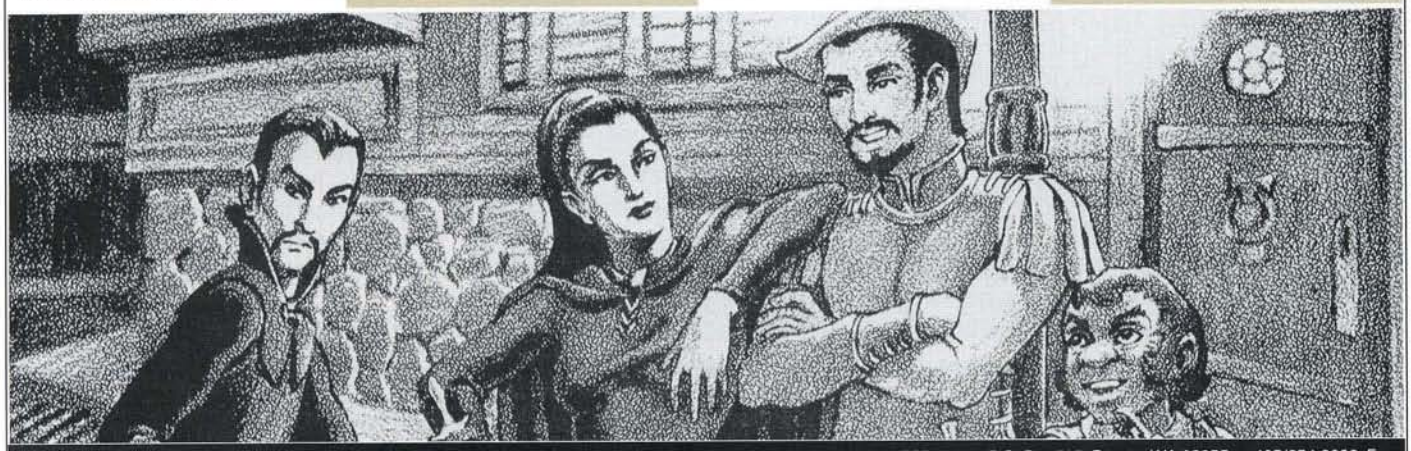
When: Mar. 13, 1999 **Where:** Port Huron, MI–Baker College
What: RPGA LIVING CITY events, guests, demos, sci-fi previews and panels, Rifts, and a bunch more!
Cost: $5 pre-reg, $7 at door
Contact: Michael Douglas <glithndr@whitestar.org> web: <www.whitestar.org/frostbite/>



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ATTENTION: Looking for RPGA Network players inside or near Maine's Augusta-Gardiner area that I can learn how to and play AD&D with. Players must be mature. Contact: Sarah D. Webber, RFD 1# Box 1344, Hallowell, ME 04340.

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Classifieds...

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PA GAMERS: Want to learn new games? Need a GM or players? Check out the Lehigh Valley Gamers Network, a new club in the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton area, into roleplaying, collectible card, board, war, and every other type of game we can get. Monthly meetings with game sessions and Battletech league play on other days. Call Kenneth Newquist at 610/923-7928, email: <nuketown@fast.net>, website: <www.nuketown.com/lvgn/>

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SOUTH HAMPSHIRE, England! AD&D players wanted to help start a regular once-every-three-weeks all day Sunday game in Fareham. We are a small group of experienced players and DMs in our early 30s, and we need more players to make a viable sized group. Age, sex, and experience are immaterial. If interested, please e-mail Gray at <sharpg@msn.com> or phone after 6:30PM on: 01329-288450 for more information.

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Please rank each article or section of the magazine from 1-5 with 1 being "lousy, never run this again" and 5 being "lovely, do it every issue." Please include any other comments you feel are appropriate. All responses received on or before December 1, 1998 will be entered for a drawing to win a free copy of the *Demihuman Deities* accessory for the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign setting.

	1	2	3	4	5
Spotlight on: Robert Burns	O	O	O	O	O
Notes From HQ	O	O	O	O	O
Your Initiative	O	O	O	O	O
TableTalk: Convention Review	O	O	O	O	O
Table Talk: Other News	O	O	O	O	O
Player and Judge Rankings	O	O	O	O	O
VS Rules Updates	O	O	O	O	O
Elminster's Everwinking Eye	O	O	O	O	O
City Stories: Mother's Cupboard	O	O	O	O	O
Law in Campaigns	O	O	O	O	O
Everything I Need to Know I Learned from the AD&D® game	O	O	O	O	O
Adventure: Audition	O	O	O	O	O
NWP Master List	O	O	O	O	O
Game of Masks	O	O	O	O	O
Brethren of the Coast Rules	O	O	O	O	O
Tournament Policies	O	O	O	O	O
Powers That Be: Kurell	O	O	O	O	O
Living Death Etiquette	O	O	O	O	O
Internet Gaming	O	O	O	O	O
Judge Voting Tips	O	O	O	O	O
Classifieds	O	O	O	O	O
Conventions	O	O	O	O	O

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